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GAME Player's™

THE LEADING MAGAZINE OF VIDEO AND COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE FOR NES: 6 PAGES OF HINTS!

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DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN

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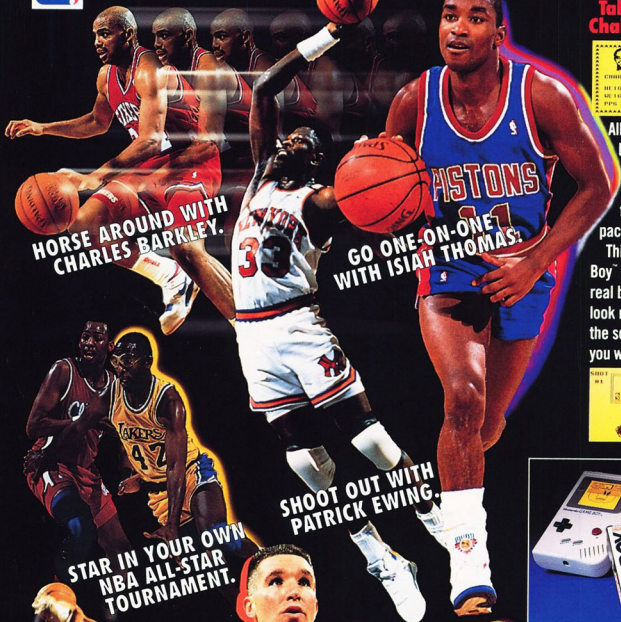
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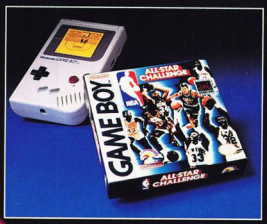

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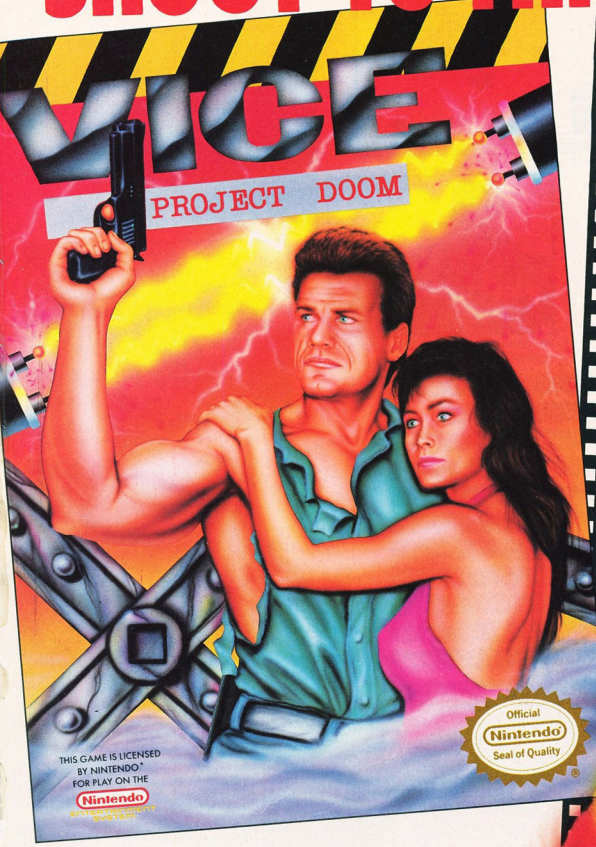

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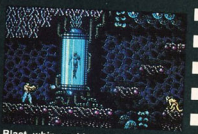

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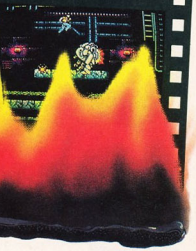

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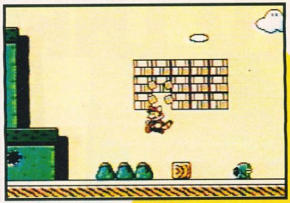

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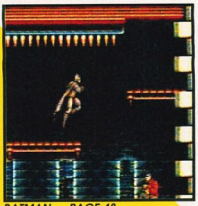

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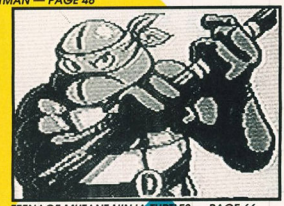

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The EDITOR'S VIEW

Right around the time this issue of *Game Player's* comes out, Nintendo will be unveiling the American version of its 16-bit videogame system at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Known in Japan as the Super Famicom — and destined to be called the Super NES everywhere else — this hot new machine has been eagerly awaited by North American gamers ever since it made its Japanese debut last November. It's scheduled to reach U.S. stores on September 1.

Game Player's has been keeping you posted on the Super NES for months, but we've been reluctant to devote too much space to a game system that wasn't yet available to most of our readers. (Only a very small number of Japanese Super Famicoms have trickled into the U.S. and Canada through unauthorized importers.) But now that the official North American version of the Super NES is almost here, we're going to step up our coverage.

In this month's "Nintendo News" column, for instance, you'll find previews of several upcoming Super NES games. Next month's column will have even more news. Some of these first looks are based on advance information provided by game companies, while others are based on actual testing of pre-release cartridges. *Game Player's* obtained a Japanese Super Famicom last November, and ever since we've been collecting information and testing games.

Our full-blown coverage of the Super NES will start with the September issue of *Game Player's*. That's when we'll bring you a complete report of Nintendo's official introduction of the system at Summer CES in Chicago, plus more previews of new games. It's an issue you won't want to miss, and it'll be coming out when the Super NES hits the stores.

Later this year, watch for a special *Game Player's* buyer's guide to the Super NES, just in time for the holidays. More than 100 companies intend to produce 16-bit games for the Super NES (compared to about 60 companies making games for the 8-bit NES), so there should be plenty of titles to choose from by early 1992. We'll help you sort them out and decide which are the best games for you.

If you're hungry for even more information, check out our sister magazine, *Game Player's Strategy Guide* to Nintendo Games. It's the only independent Nintendo-specific magazine in North America, and we'll be covering the Super NES there, too.

Of course, all this coverage doesn't mean we'll be ignoring the established game systems. By most estimates there are about 30 million 8-bit Nintendo machines in the U.S. alone, so the 8-bit market should remain healthy for years to come. The Sega Genesis is currently the leading 16-bit system, followed by the NEC TurboGrafx-16. Nintendo's immensely popular Game Boy is the champ of the hand-helds, and the Atari Lynx is the best-selling color portable (especially since last winter's price cut). Sega's color hand-held, the Game Gear, and NEC's entry, the TurboExpress, should be available throughout North America in larger numbers this summer. Also, steadily falling prices are helping sales of PC-compatible computers, and the Amiga may get a boost from Commodore's new Amiga-compatible CDTV.

But even though the electronic game industry remains robust, things could be better. Due to the recession, an overcrowded field of competitors, and other factors, some game companies are definitely hurting. There have been numerous layoffs and other cutbacks, and as a result you'll probably see fewer titles released this year and in 1992 than were expected. In fact, some companies are no longer releasing *any* games themselves; they're working solely as game developers for other firms. And some companies are struggling for their very survival.

Because of these troubles, the arrival of Nintendo's Super NES is awaited as eagerly by many business people as it is by game players. If Nintendo can really sell 12 million Super NES machines in the U.S. by the end of 1992 — as some experts predict — it could drastically transform the entire industry. Hopefully this stirring of the pot will result in more and better games for everyone.

Tom R. Halfhill
Editor, *Game Player's*

GP

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SEGA GENESIS

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July 1991

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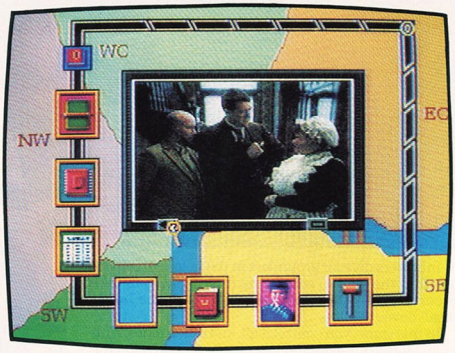

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For the first time ever, CD technology is being used to create live action video in a video game. That's video that features real live actors. And you interact with them.

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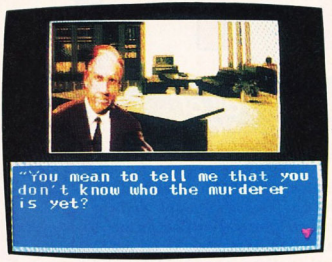

This murder is so shocking that even your host is losing sleep. Not to mention his hair.

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TMNT: Fall of the Foot Clan

Here's a secret trick for everybody who has *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Fall of the Foot Clan* for the Game Boy. When you're on the configuration screen, hold down the A and B buttons at the same time and press Select. A "?" will appear by the 5 on the stage-select row. Choose it and press Start. You can now pick any bonus round you want to go to.

David Salisbury
Texas

Thanks for the great tip, David!

Faxanadu

I'm having trouble with *Faxanadu*. I can't find out how to use the battle helmet. Whenever I get shot at by magic, I lose a lot of energy. How can I use the battle helmet?

Nathan To
British Columbia, Canada

You must have the battle suit and Dragon Slayer sword as well as the battle helmet before you can equip anyone with it.

Do you have any questions about your favorite video-games or computer games? Or do you have any hints and tips to share with your fellow game players? If so, write to The Tip Sheet, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.

Maniac Mansion

In *Maniac Mansion*, how do you lift the concrete slab, and how do you get under the house?

Rob Thomas
Tennessee

Use the Hunk-o-Matic to build up some muscles. Then you'll be able to lift the concrete slab. With your new-found biceps, you'll also be able to lift the grate in the pantry and crawl under the house.

Shadowgate

There are a lot of things I don't understand about *Shadowgate* for Nintendo. There are about five passageways I can't get to. There's also a brass key that's held by a skeleton across a shark-infested lake. How can I get through the passageways, and how do I get the key?

Damon Thames
California

There are several passageways you just can't get to — they are actually the boundaries of the game.

To get the brass key, drop the magic sphere into the lake to freeze the water. Then walk across the ice and pick up the key. Remember to use your torch on the lake before you leave — this thaws the ice so you can retrieve the sphere.

Super C

Here are a few tips for *Super C* for NES. For a sound test, press and hold the A and B buttons, then press Start during the title screen.

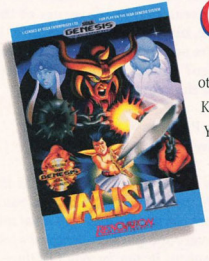
Also, after you finish the game and the credits are over, press and hold A, B, and Select, then press Start. This lets you start the game again, but you'll begin with the amount of men and the score you had when you finished the game.

Howard Grace
Nova Scotia, Canada

Great tips! Thanks for sharing them.

Dare to wield the sword of Valis!

8 MEG POWER



Okay, so the real world isn't so bad. But Dreamland and the Dark World are absolutely killer! And you're part of it.

You become Yuko Ahso, and you get transported to the otherworld to defend Dreamland against attack from the Dark King Glames. Only by wielding the powerful Sword of Valis can Yuko and her twin sister, Valna, defeat Glames' evil hordes.

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Final Fantasy

Several months ago I received the NES game *Final Fantasy* as a present. Since then I've succeeded in winning the game several times. But in all my searching, I've yet to find the final white magic spell (LIF2), the final black magic spell (NUKE), or the ultimate weapon (MASMUNE). Could you give me a hand with this?

G. Paul Komlodi
Wisconsin

The final spells are in the towns of Jaia and Lefein. The Masmune Sword can be found in the last castle, the Temple of Fiends.

Sword of Vermilion

In *Sword of Vermilion* for Sega Genesis, I'm having trouble finding Bruno in the Harmony Cave. I've searched every corner of the cave, but have come up empty. Is there somewhere you can tell me to go? I need the Ring of Water and the crown.

Jon Polstein
New York

You probably haven't talked to the right people in the town you reach before Harmony Cave. You must talk to everyone *you meet. If no one's told you about Bruno, he won't be there.*

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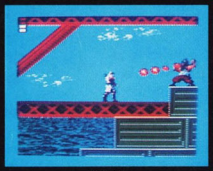
G-LOC

SUPER MONACO GP


SHINOBI

CASTLE OF ILLUSION STARRING MICKEY MOUSE

GAME GEAR™
COLOR PORTABLE SEGA GAME SYSTEM

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+Screens shown are actual Game Gear games photographed on a video monitor for reproduction purposes. ++Available pending FCC approval.

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EXCLUSIVE!

SECRET SPECS OF ATARI'S 16-BIT PANTHER

Tom R. Halfhill

For months, industry scuttlebutt has indicated that Atari Corp. is working on a new 16-bit home videogame system that would hit the market sometime late this year or early in 1992. Actually, Atari first began planning a 16-bit game system as far back as 1986, but the project was delayed because of an internal conflict between two design teams. One team supposedly favored a system based on the Atari ST personal computer, while the other wanted to develop an entirely new game machine from scratch.

Apparently that conflict was resolved within the past year, because Atari is now finishing work on a new machine that's code-named "Panther." It's rumored to be extremely powerful, but no one has managed to uncover its technical specifications — until now.

Game Player's recently learned some vital details about the Panther from reliable sources. This information suggests that the Panther may be the most powerful home videogame system yet.

The Panther's most impressive features are its huge color palette and very fast computer chip. Sources say the Panther can display more than 256,000 different colors — about eight times as many as Nintendo's 16-bit Super NES (Super Famicom) and four times as many as SNK's Neo-Geo! Like other game systems, however, the Panther normally can't display all of its colors on the screen at the same time. But most screen modes are said to be capable of handling at least 256 colors simultaneously. The Panther's "standard" screen mode is said to have a resolution of about 320 x 200 pixels, comparable to the most common screen modes of other 16-bit home game systems.

The Panther may have more processing power than most office computers.

Inside the Panther, sources say, is a Motorola 68000 microprocessor chip similar to those used in the Neo-Geo and Sega Genesis. But the 68000 chip in the Panther is said to be twice as fast, operating at a clock speed of 16 megahertz. By comparison, most Apple Macintosh computers are powered by 8-megahertz 68000 chips; only the more costly Macintosh II models have faster microprocessors. That means the Panther would have more raw processing power than most office computers!

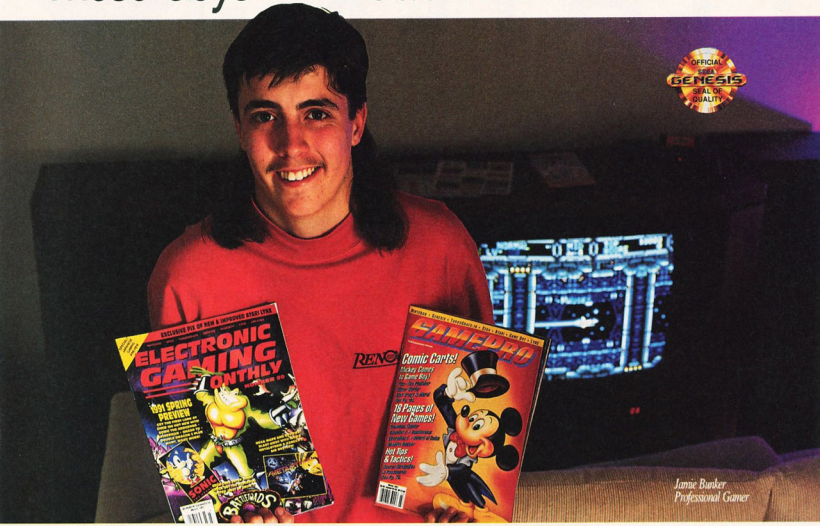
In addition to the 68000 chip, the Panther also has custom chips for graphics. These chips include a feature known as *hardware scaling*, which means that game designers can make objects appear to zoom larger or smaller on the screen. Although scaling can be accomplished in other ways without this feature, it's generally faster and smoother when included as a built-in function. Atari's hand-held Lynx has hardware scaling, as does Nintendo's Super NES. However, sources say the Panther's graphics chips *do not* have a similar function known as *hardware rotation*, which would allow screen objects to be easily rotated. So far, the Super NES is the only home game system with built-in rotation.

For sound effects and music, sources say the Panther has a stereo synthesizer chip with 32 sound channels, digital filtering, and digital sampling at a frequency of 20 kilohertz. The high sampling frequency (four times the rate of the Sega Genesis) means the Panther could reproduce sounds with superior fidelity.

When will the Panther be available? Sources say it should be ready by this fall, and that prototypes are already in the hands of a few game developers. The price is expected to be comparable to that of competing 16-bit home game systems — under $200.

GP

"These Guys Think Gaiares Is Awesome."



"I Happen To Agree."

There you have it. The critics agree that Gaiares is one of the hottest games around. In fact, once Dr. Dave of GAMEPRO Magazine got his hands on the 8 meg fighting power of Gaiares, he gave it a perfect score, and stated, "Novice space jockey's need not apply". Then came Electronic gaming Monthly magazine. They were so impressed with Gaiares, they couldn't put it down. They said "Games just don't get any better than this. Gaiares is Phenomenal! 8 Meg of incredible graphics put it in a league all its own. If you thought the lava in the TF-3 was intense, wait till you see the hyperspace scene!" So now that you know what the pro's think, go experience the awesome Gaiares for yourself. And watch out for the bosses.

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FACE TO FACE...WITH EDDIE GARCIA ("GUYS NEXT DOOR")

Jason R. Rich

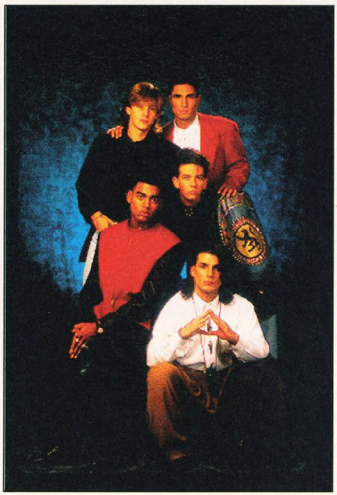
With a Saturday morning TV show on NBC and a popular record album, the Guys Next Door are five talented performers who love singing, dancing, acting — and playing videogames.

All of the Guys Next Door — Eddie Garcia, Bobby Leslie, Damon Sharpe, Parick Dancy, and Chris Wolf — are Nintendo fans. During a recent national tour, they spent hours each day playing Nintendo games on their tour bus.

"Regardless of what time it was, on the bus someone was always playing Nintendo," says 21-year-old Eddie Garcia. "Some of my favorite games for the NES are *Super Mario Bros. 3*, *Castlevania III*, *Chip 'n Dale: Rescue Rangers*, and *NES Play Action Football*. All together, I have about 21 NES cartridges."

NES Play Action Football is a particular favorite among the Guys Next Door because it has a four-player mode that works with the NES Satellite. "When you're playing with two-person teams, scoring a touchdown becomes a big deal," says Eddie. "When you fumble the ball, it's always funny to see all of the players trying to get their hands on it."

Another favorite with the Guys is *Tecmo Bowl*. "When we play *Tecmo Bowl*, the player who has the San Francisco 49ers always wins. The team has one play which they always get right. The Giants are also a good team, because they are the best at blocking the kicks. I love the speed and realism of *Tecmo Bowl*."



The Guys Next Door (clockwise from bottom): Chris Wolf, Patrick Dancy, Bobby Leslie, Eddie Garcia, and Damon Sharpe.

Each of the Guys Next Door also has his own Game Boy. "I love *Batman* and *Super Marioland* on the Game Boy, and I want to get the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* game," says Eddie. "But when playing *Batman*, I can't figure out what to do to get past the Bat Wing phase of the game. It's very difficult."

Eddie was discovered by choreographer and recording artist Paula Abdul, then appeared in a Janet Jackson music video. He was also part of Michael Jackson's "Bad" world tour and was featured in the "Moonwalker" video. Besides playing videogames, Eddie also enjoys collecting comic books and playing various sports.

Eddie says he would like to see the "Guys Next Door" TV series become more like "Saturday Night Live" or "In Living Color," where characters from the skits reappear from week to week. "I think the ["Guys Next Door"] television series is a great alternative to cartoons on Saturday mornings. Sometimes the show gets ridiculous, but it's lots of fun. I would also like to record more dance music, instead of just pop music on future albums."

With a TV series, a record album, and even some Guys Next Door dolls, what's next? Maybe there'll be a Guys Next Door videogame someday....

GP

WIN WIN WIN

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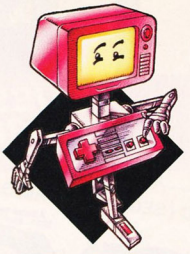
WIN WIN WIN

By the time you read this issue of *Game Player's*, Nintendo will have already officially unveiled the Super NES at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. By then, everyone and his brother will be talking about it, eagerly awaiting the day when it'll hit the store shelves (which is currently slated for some time this fall).

Game Player's made a pretty thorough examination of Super NES hardware when it was introduced in Japan as the Super Famicom (see "Player's World," *Game Player's*, December 1990). However, hard facts about screen resolution, number of available colors, and how many sound channels the machine has don't really answer the all-important question of how well it *plays*. We've had a Japanese version of the Super NES since late last year, and have already featured some preliminary coverage of the few games that were around then (see "Editor's View," *Game Player's*, March '91).

At this writing, though, information is scarce and the rumor mill is working overtime. We've been busily trying to sort the wheat from the chaff, evaluating Japanese versions of games that will most likely hit these shores by Christmas or early '92, as well as getting advance word from American companies about their upcoming plans.

For the next two months, this column will cover everything we've been able to learn so far, plus any late-breaking news we manage to dig up as we go to press — consider this an "unofficial" preview of the Super NES.



NINTENDO NEWS

Super NES News

Jeff Lundrigan

1 *F-Zero*, a fast-paced, futuristic race game, boasts a great soundtrack.

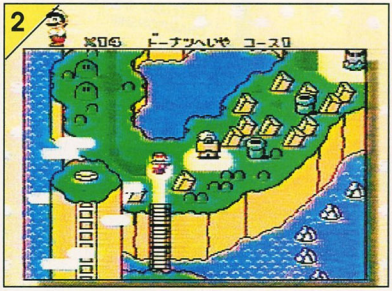
2 Mario waves to you from the entrance to a bonus world. Notice that the paths to other worlds lead offscreen — a *long way* offscreen.

3 Nintendo's favorite hero achieves his ultimate state of being: cape-wearin', high-flyin', dinosaur-ridin', fire-breathin' Mario — all in *Mario 4*!

Three from the Source

When the Super Famicom debuted in Japan, Nintendo had released three games: *F-Zero*, *Pilotwings*, and *Super Mario 4*. In one way or another, each of these games seemed to show off different features of the system.

F-Zero, a futuristic road-race game, allows players to choose one of four hovercraft-style cars, each with its own distinct racing characteristics, and pit their racer against computer-controlled op-



NINTENDO NEWS

in the later stages, and the helicopter section does require you to bomb antiaircraft sites before you can land.

This may not sound terribly exciting at first, but the realism of this game is startling. No other game we've seen so far better shows off the hardware-based rotation and scaling features of the Super NES. Only the fact that the

ponents. Other features include seven different tracks on which to race, multiple difficulty levels, and Grand Prix or single-race contests.

The backgrounds fairly zip by, and you get an amazing sense of speed as you race around the track. As playable as it is, though, the most interesting feature of the game is its soundtrack. It isn't the most original tune in the world, but it *sounds* great: like a softly muted trumpet. The Super NES sound chip and digital signal processor deliver sound quality that's light-years beyond the 8-bit NES.

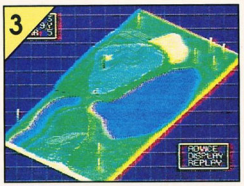
Pilotwings lets you fly a surprisingly large number of different types of aircraft, from biplanes and helicopters to such off-the-wall contraptions as jet-packs and a wing-flapping "bird man" outfit. The game consists mostly of piloting these craft through various maneuvers — flying through airborne rings and so on — although there is some limited dogfighting

landscape you're flying over is obviously a computer-generated cartoon gives it away — the *movement* is superb. *Pilotwings* is a third-

1 *Pilotwings* features some of the most realistic movement we've ever seen. You risk a bad case of vertigo trying land the biplane.

2 For an extra challenge, try blowing up the antiaircraft guns and landing your rescue/attack helicopter *at night*.

3 *Hole in One* shows you the lie of the course with an amazing 3-D perspective. You can zoom in on any section of the hole you'd like to get a closer look at as well.



person game (the view is from outside the craft, not inside the cockpit), but it certainly points toward the possibility of a true flight simulator for a home videogame system.

Finally, there's *Super Mario 4*. All the technology in the world isn't going to help much if the games are stale and boring. *Super Mario 4* is not only a worthy addition to the *Mario* series, it's also probably one of the best games we've played on any system. The difference between the 8-bit *Mario 3* and the 16-bit *Mario 4* is striking, like comparing a go-cart with a roller coaster.

Mario 4 is a *big* game, but more importantly, it's absolutely packed with *stuff* — no two sections are alike. Mario has more personality than ever, and the detail, depth, and color are amazing.

Debate is currently raging over which cartridge is going to come boxed with the Super NES: *Super Mario 4* or *Pilotwings*. *Pilotwings* has more of an "ooh aah" quality about it — it looks great right away and really shows off the machine, whereas *Mario 4* has to be played before its virtues are apparent. On the other hand, what better way to sell the machine than package it with the next *Mario*? Chances are that Nintendo will have settled the question at Summer CES. We'll keep you posted.

Hole in One

Another good game that shows off the Super NES is from HAL America: a golf game titled *Hole in*

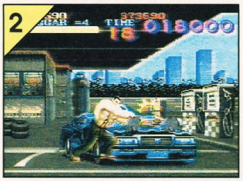
NINTENDO NEWS

One in Japan (and probably the U.S. as well). The single feature of *Hole in One* that impresses us most is its speed. Anyone who has played a computer golf simulation — *Links*, for instance — knows that for the game to render a view of the golf course from where your ball landed can often take awhile. *Hole in One* does it with incredible speed — almost instantly, in fact.

Further, the game fully utilizes the machine's scrolling and scaling abilities, beginning each hole with a swirling zoom-in of the course (the word *show-off* applies here), and snaps in to a closeup of the hole during those putts that *almost* make it. *Hole in One* should be thought of more as a golf *game* than a true golf *simulation*, but these kinds of graphic pyrotechnics make it enjoyable no matter what it's called.

Final Fight

Final Fight from Capcom is the single hottest-selling game cartridge in Japan right now, and it's easy to see why. As the mayor of a major metropolitan city, it's your job to keep the streets clean, but when underworld thugs kidnap

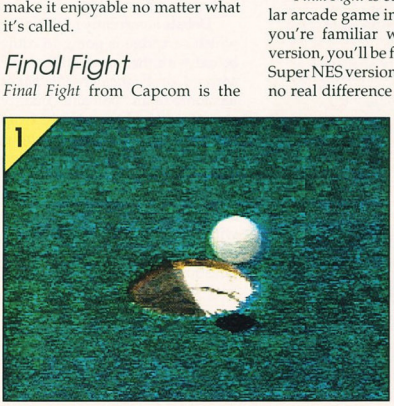


your girlfriend, it's time to roll up your sleeves and give it the personal touch.

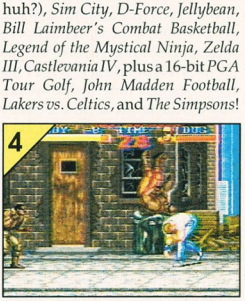
You can play one of two characters: the huge, muscle-bound Haggar, or the slighter, but quicker, Cody. Cody's speed makes the going a little easier, since you're often attacked by whole mobs of enemies and he's able to maneuver around them. On the other hand, Haggar (who apparently was a professional wrestler before he was mayor) has a lot more interesting (and gloriously silly) fighting moves.

Final Fight is currently a popular arcade game in this country. If you're familiar with the arcade version, you'll be familiar with the Super NES version because there's no real difference — the two versions are the *same game*, pixel for pixel. If we can expect more direct translations like this, we can also expect a lot of gaming excitement.

We'll have more news — and more game coverage — next month. Until then, here's a list of upcoming titles that might whet your appetite: *Ultraman*, *Gradius III*, *Big Run*, *U.N. Squadron*, *Super Ghouls and Ghosts*, *Super Darius*, *Super Play Action Football*, *Super R-Type*, *Super Adventure Island* (a lot of games with "super" in the title, huh?), *Sim City*, *D-Force*, *Jellybean*, *Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball*, *Legend of the Mystical Ninja*, *Zelda III*, *Castlevania IV*, plus a 16-bit *PGA Tour Golf*, *John Madden Football*, *Lakers vs. Celtics*, and *The Simpsons*!



1. One nice (if mildly sadistic) touch is the closeup — you can watch your ball skip over the cup in agonizing detail.
2. *Final Fight* closely duplicates the arcade version, right down to the bonus stage where you kill a car.
3. Haggar can unleash some incredible and utterly outlandish moves, like this flying jump-grab-sit-on-the-head attack.
4. Cody is less flashy but equally tough. Use his shoulder flip to throw enemies into one another.



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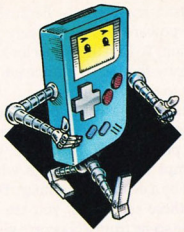


GAMEBOY PLAYERS

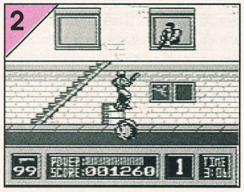
Robocop

Phill Powell

What has happened to Detroit? In the old days, everyone understood the meaning of law and order. The lawmakers wrote the laws, and most people obeyed. The police were around to handle the criminals, those who chose to make their own rules. The average citizen knew whom to trust and whom to fear.

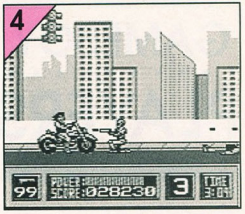
But these days, the local government can't even run the city or keep the streets safe. Admitting failure, the town leaders took bids from private companies who claimed they could restore safety to the city...for a price.

The job of running Detroit's police department went to Omni Consumer Products (OCP), a gigantic corporation involved in just about everything. The executives of OCP claimed to have a new kind of police officer. The big surprise came when everyone saw that OCP's breakthrough in police protection wasn't the product of an intensive new training program — it was the product of a laboratory experiment.



The scientists at OCP started with a man who was nearly dead. OCP built him a new, mechanical body with an almost indestructible frame of reinforced titanium. He was outfitted with super bionic arms and legs that gave him great speed and strength. As a result, he was physically tougher than any patrolman who had ever walked a beat.

Then OCP went to work on his mind. Neurosurgeons wiped his memory clean, leaving it completely blank and fresh. They reprogrammed the supercop to follow strict rules and regulations of law enforcement.



OCP had lived up to its claims. Tests showed that this new breed of police officer could indeed outperform any regular cop around. He was the perfect creation. And he was called "Robocop."

Motown's Meanest Machine

Robocop first appeared on movie screens in 1988 and created an instant sensation. Since then, a second film has been released, as well as several Robocop videogames. Now, from Ocean of America, there's *Robocop* for the Game Boy.

Robocop sticks pretty closely to the story of the original movie. As Robocop, you begin the game by walking an exceedingly dangerous

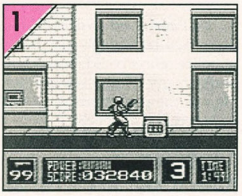
1 It looks as if you're caught in a crossfire on the streets of Detroit. Crouch down and take care of the enemies on the sidewalk first, then blast the gunman in the window.

2 When this guy shows up and tosses a bomb at you, do the only smart thing — jump! You can never tell how far he'll throw the explosive, so stay on guard.

3 Robocop is this hostage's only hope of survival. To "cheat," press the pause button, carefully aim the cross hairs at the bad guy, and then resume the game while rapidly firing.

4 Don't let this two-wheeled goon push you around or run you over. Crouch, open fire, and hold your position.

GAMEBOY PLAYERS



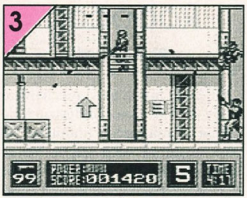
beat. Luckily, you're toting the Auto-9, a special-issue handgun that packs a mighty punch.

Stages 1 and 3 of the game take place on the mean streets of Detroit. The sidewalks are crowded with creeps, and snipers pop out of almost every window. The snipers are difficult to eliminate, partly because it takes two shots to kill them and partly because they can fire diagonally. You must carefully wait to avoid their line of fire before moving to the best firing position, which is almost directly beneath them.

Other kinds of street trash are also difficult to handle. For instance, one type of thug approaches you while swinging a club. If he connects, you'll lose a lot of life energy. Another creep walks up rather innocently, then tosses a bomb at you. This guy is unpredictable — you never know how far he'll toss his bomb, so you have to watch him closely each time he appears.

You can't avoid suffering at least some damage from all the gunplay going on. In fact, there are a few areas where you can be ambushed by so many enemies at once that it's possible to lose all your life energy in just a few seconds. Because of this, power-ups become very important. To find them, just look for the baby-food jars that appear from time to time.

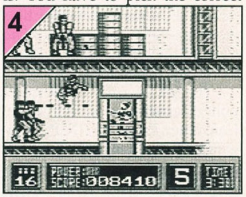
In addition to the side-scrolling action, *Robocop* offers other scenes and perspectives. In stage 2, you attempt to free a hostage who's held by a desperate gunman. During these sequences, you see the crime scene from Robocop's viewpoint. You'll find that the gunman will have to be shot a number of times before he'll go down and surrender his hostage.



If you get stuck, here's a clever way to "cheat": When you pause the game by pressing the Start button, you can still move the cross hairs to aim your gun. Then, when you press the Start button again to resume the game, your aim will be dead on your target. To get the most from this trick, repeatedly press the B button to fire your gun *before* resuming the game. That way you won't be giving the gunman any time at all to dodge your shots. Repeat this trick until your target is down.

After successfully patrolling the streets a second time in stage 3, you'll advance to stage 4's photo identification sequence. Not only does this level adapt an interesting scene from the movie, but it also gives you a brief opportunity to rest your weary trigger finger.

Your job here is to play mix-and-match with some different facial features recorded in police mug shots. The goal is to build a face that duplicates another face shown on the left side of the screen. It sounds considerably easier than it is. You have to pick the correct hair, chin, eyes, mouth, nose, and ears — all within 40 seconds.



Neither stage 2 nor stage 4 is terribly difficult, but it's important to complete them on your first try. If you fail, you have to start over again at the beginning of the preceding street-fighting level. In other words, if you can't assemble the photo I.D., you'll resume the tough street beat of stage 3; if you accidentally shoot the hostage in stage 2, you go back to the very beginning of the game.

1 Robocop can't live on action-packed adventure alone. Feed him whenever you come across a jar of baby food.

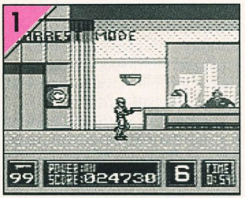
2 Identifying suspects is part of every cop's job. Robocop has to assemble this composite picture in stage 4.

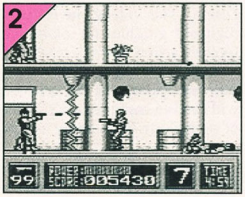
3 When you're in the gang's hideout, you have to shoot from a variety of locations, such as this elevator.

4 You had no idea what kind of trouble would await you when your elevator ride came to an end — but now you know.

However, if you make it through the first four stages, you'll move to the gang hideout in stage 5. The graphics have more of an industrial feel, but the action is fairly similar to what came before. Gang members appear on the hideout's different floors. You've got to move among the barrels and girders to blast the criminals before they hunt you down.

In stage 6, you enter the well-furnished office of OCP executive Dick Jones. But you haven't come for a friendly chat — you're there to arrest him.

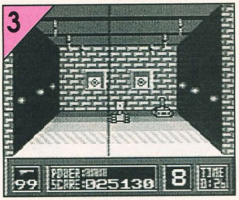




Who's the Boss?

Since the Game Boy version of *Robocop* closely follows the movie, it's not surprising that the game will make more sense if you know what happened in the movie. To be specific, you need to understand the conspiracy operating within OCP. It reaches nearly to the top of the corporate ladder, and that's why you've shown up in Dick Jones's office.

Unfortunately, you won't succeed in arresting Jones. As any fan can tell you, Robocop was programmed to follow four basic directives. The first three relate to basic law enforcement ideals, such as serving the public and so forth. But the fourth directive is classified top secret, and for good reason. It was implanted in Robocop by Dick Jones, and it forbids you from arresting any OCP personnel.

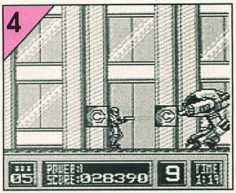


Instead, you'll have to fight for your life against OCP's other secret weapon — a massive robot called ED-209. ED-209 can move and follow you while spitting out a rapid-fire spray of bullets. The best way to survive is to drop to one knee when your head is directly underneath ED-209's main gun. This should get you out of its potent line of fire.

In stage 7, you leave Jones's office and try to find an exit from OCP headquarters. Naturally, you wouldn't expect a giant corporation to lack security guards, so you can count on plenty of armed resistance. Unlike most security guards, however, these guys aren't content to merely throw you out of the building. They won't settle for anything less than your complete destruction.

Although you've already had worlds of shooting practice by this point in the game, stage 8 is a shooting gallery where you can brush up on your marksmanship. Small tanklike vehicles roll toward you while stationary targets appear throughout the brick enclosure.

Stage 9, which takes place in a junkyard, returns to the side-scrolling action of stages 1, 3, 5, and 7. The backgrounds are different, but the action is similar. This level does offer something new, though — a special weapon called the Manta Gun. Other weapon power-ups are found throughout *Robocop*, but this one is by far the most valuable. When you fire the Manta Gun, it cleans out everything in its path. You'll definitely need some serious firepower in this stage, especially when you run into ED-209 for a second time.



1 Robocop is ready to arrest OCP executive Dick Jones, but a stubborn mental block prevents him from carrying out his duty.

2 The zigzagging line on the left is a laser beam that shoots downward. It's just one of the hazards complicating your escape from OCP headquarters.

3 You can practice your marksmanship in this shooting gallery of stage 8.

4 Robocop isn't OCP's only armed robot. This is ED-209, back for a second engagement in stage 9.

We won't spoil the ending by revealing what happens in stage 10, but we will tell you that it, too, is true to the movie. If you've made it through the first nine levels, the tenth should be a cinch. Just remember what you learned in stage 2 and apply that knowledge here.

It's good that the game's designers separated the side-scrolling scenes in *Robocop* with stages that call for other skills. As a result, *Robocop* should appeal to fans of the blockbuster movie and to game players looking for full-tilt, gun-blazing action.

GP

It is said that there is no rest for the weary. The same is true, apparently, for the fiendishly clever. I'm referring to the creative madmen at Williams Electronics Games and their partners-in-crime at Bally/Midway. Hardly a month goes by that something new and refreshing doesn't come screaming out of their Chicago headquarters to please arcade gamers. What's your pleasure — videogames? Pinball? How about a resurrected old favorite, tricked out with state-of-the-art technology?

If you're a longtime gamer, your first glance at *Slugfest!* may strike a vaguely reminiscent chord: "Hey, I remember *that* game!" Indeed, it *is* that game...and then some. For one- or two-player head-to-head competition, *Slugfest!* delivers all the thrills, excitement, and strategy of the great American pastime, baseball.

With its slanted playfield and shiny steel ball, *Slugfest!* somewhat resembles a pinball machine. The ball is "pitched" from a hidden chute beneath the pitcher's mound toward a swinging bat mounted beside home plate at the bottom of the playfield.

Pitchers have their choice of four wicked deliveries: a tricky curve ball, a change-up, a screwball, and major league heat (fastball). There's a separate button on the control panel for each type of pitch.

1 *Slugfest!* is a revival of pinball baseball, updated with high-tech features and digitized sound.

The opposing teams have distinct lineups, including hitters with their own unique batting statistics, strengths, and weaknesses. To reflect this, the values of the seven targets at the top of the playfield change from batter to batter. You can also substitute a pinch hitter at critical times during the game. This raises a center ramp to give you a shot at an upper-deck home run. As a result, pinch hitters don't have any "out" targets lit up — only hits!

While your buddy is mulling over his repertoire of pitches, you can even try to steal a base by rapidly tapping the Steal button, hopefully before he can throw you out.

Slugfest! enlivens the action with all the sounds of a real major-league ballpark. You'll hear the cheers of the crowd, the nonstop hawking of snack vendors, the razzing of hecklers, and even the organist leading a "Charge!"

Another newfangled feature is the dot-matrix display scoreboard at the back of the playfield. Spectacular light shows, fireworks, and other special effects complete the experience. And if that's not enough, *Slugfest!* can also be equipped with a specially designed dispenser that rewards you with Topps baseball cards!

Is baseball a little too pastoral for you? Do you yearn for the bone-crunching energy and violence of the gridiron? Williams has the answer for you, too — *High Impact Football*. This videogame features digitized graphics for on-screen football action that's remarkably realistic. You can choose from 15 different teams, and the machine will keep an entire season's worth of statistics in its memory as you play.

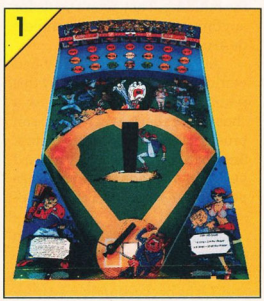
Unlike some sports games, *High Impact Football* has simple controls. There's a single joystick for moving the ballplayers and an action button that lets you select from more than 40 authentic offensive plays and defensive formations. Test your skill at the long-range bombs, double reverses, halfback options, the nickel defense, zone coverage, stunts, the red-dog blitz, and more.

Like *Slugfest!*, *High Impact Football* also includes lots of off-field action, including coaches; cheerleaders; the hot-dog antics of the ballplayers; the outrageous banter of Manic Max, the deranged play-by-play commentator; and

ARCADE ACTION

New Games from Williams, Bally/Midway

Scott Wolf



1

ARCADE ACTION

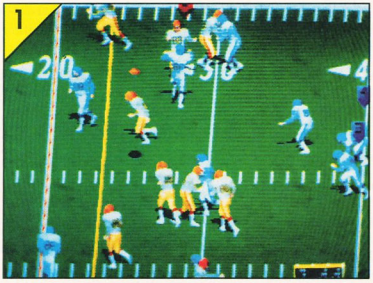
the cheers and jeers of the fans, led by Joe Six-Pack.

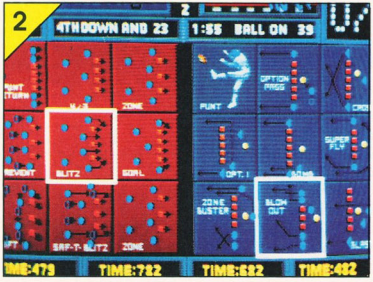
If you're not a sports fan, how about taking a three-hour sightseeing tour aboard the S.S. *Minnow*? The entire cast of the famous TV show is on hand for Bally's new *Gilligan's Island* pinball game. You can join the castaways on their uncharted desert isle as they scamper to gather the ingredients of the Professor's Secret Formula Lava Seltzer to settle the stomach of Kona, the volcano god. Smack the ball around the playfield to collect pineapples, sea shells, bananas, rope, poached turtle eggs, and a shrunken head. Mix well, then send Gilligan on a wild jungle run to deliver the potion to Kona. If you're good, you can score 50 million points along the way.

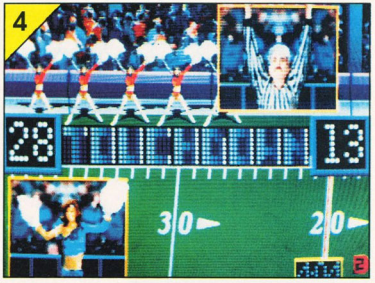
Gilligan's Island features the digitized voices of Gilligan...the Skipper, too...the millionaire, and his wife...the movie star...the Professor *and* Mary Ann! The machine also displays their faces and other special effects on a dot-matrix panel just below the backglass. In addition to the voice samples taken from the TV show, Bob Denver (Gilligan) recorded dialogue specifically for the game. And like the TV show, the game is very silly and an awful lot of fun.

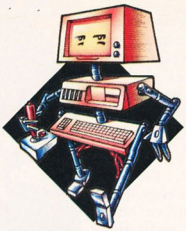
GP

1. *High Impact Football* looks almost as good as live TV coverage of a real football game.
2. One or two players can compete in *High Impact Football*, choosing from a wide selection of authentic offensive plays and defensive formations.
3. The coach goes crazy when his team fumbles away the ball. Could that be Mike Ditka?
4. Referees and cheerleaders add to the atmosphere in *High Impact Football*.









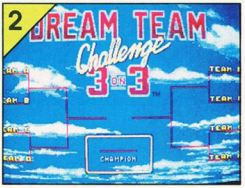
PC PLAYERS

Hoops, Nets, and Green Monsters

Neil Randall

Luckily for sports fans, game designers keep trying to come up with the perfect simulation of every popular sport in North America. This time around, hockey, baseball, and basketball take center stage. The main difference between them is that *Wayne Gretzky Hockey II* and *MicroLeague Baseball: The Manager's Challenge* offer full-game simulations, while *The Dream Team: 3-on-3 Challenge* isolates one popular offshoot of basketball, the 3-on-3 game.

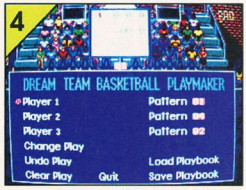
The question, as always, is how well these games simulate their respective sports. Does Data East's *The Dream Team* demonstrate the difficulty of defending against a determined slam-dunk? Does Bethesda Softworks' *Wayne Gretzky II* re-create the fast-changing fluidity of pro hockey? Does MicroLeague Sports' *MicroLeague Baseball* offer the strategic decisions faced by every manager during every game? If they don't, then in at least some important respects, they fail as simulations. But even if a game is an accurate simulation, it may not be successful as an entertaining *game*.



Fortunately, all three of these simulations show that the designers have done their homework. *The Dream Team* does indeed simulate the difficulties of defending against a determined slam-dunk; in fact, it goes further, showing how difficult it is to defend against *any* well-mounted assault on the hoop. *Wayne Gretzky II* re-creates the sudden switches from offense to defense that characterize pro hockey, and it goes still further in its depiction of plays and power-plays. Finally, *MicroLeague Baseball* forces you to make decision after decision, demonstrating the difficult choices faced by both the managers and the ballplayers.

The Dream Team

The artwork on the box of this game features photos of Patrick Ewing, Dominique Wilkins, and Joe Dumars. The game's premise is that every basketball fan would love to match this trio against any other threesome in the business. In other words, Ewing, Wilkins, and Dumars *are* the dream team, and you get the opportunity to control them or challenge them. If you choose the challenge, a number of other National Basketball Association stars are on the disk, awaiting their opportunity.



1 *The Dream Team*: The one-player practice option lets you hone your skills. Here, Joe Dumars shows how it's done.

2 The tournament pits you against seven other teams. Good luck; winning a tournament is long and demanding.

3 This game is being played on pavement behind what looks like a school. There are several different surface options, because not everyone gets to play in a gym.

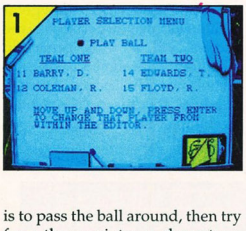
4 The play-selection system lets you decide which ballplayers will make which plays.

PC PLAYERS

You can play *The Dream Team* as a one- or two-player game. In each case, you have the option of playing 1-on-1, 2-on-2, or 3-on-3. If you choose a two-player game with the 3-on-3 option, you and a friend can play on the same team.

Once you've mastered the regular game, you'll want to try the Dream Team Tournament, which pits you against seven other teams to see who comes out best. In tournament play, all eight teams can, if you wish, be controlled by human players. In other words, if you get a bunch of friends together, it'll be a real (and probably great) tournament.

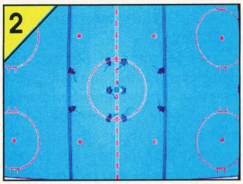
Basically, your task on offense



is to pass the ball around, then try for a three-pointer, a closer two-point shot, a lay-up, or a super-macho dunk. As in the real NBA, there's a shot clock, so you can't dawdle for long without making an attempt at the basket.

The Dream Team also lets you choose from a selection of predesigned plays or create new plays of your own. Another feature lets you alter the abilities of the ballplayers.

Like all computer basketball games, *The Dream Team* takes awhile to get used to. Once you grow comfortable with it, however, the game plays quickly and well. And its 256-color VGA graphics are very, very appealing.



Wayne Gretzky II

In essence, this sequel is the same game as the original, with some important additions but little difference in game play and no improvement in the game's only so-so graphics. However, since the original *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* was hailed by many (including me) as the best sports simulation in computer game history, drastic changes were hardly necessary.

Wayne Gretzky II retains the overhead vantage point of the original, as well as the line-changing and statistics-editing systems. New features include better menus; software support for the AdLib and Soundblaster boards; the ability to show goal highlights at the end of the game (rather than just as they happen); the option of choosing referees of different temperaments; and a play-creation system that lets you design 16 special plays for each team.

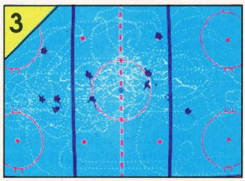
Another important improvement is that the computer is now a better player. You'll find that computer opponents will shoot at the net much more often and much more realistically. The game also incorporates the National Hockey League's new offside rule, and two human players can now join forces on the same team.

1 You can choose your own ballplayers or let the computer choose them for you.

2 *Wayne Gretzky Hockey II*: The teams line up for the opening faceoff. The computer waits until you're ready before dropping the puck — unlike in the original game.

3 Two players battle for the puck near center ice. Be sure not to hold opponents too vigorously, or you'll almost certainly draw a penalty.

If you liked the original *Wayne Gretzky Hockey*, it's worth picking up this significant improvement. If you've never played the game, and if you have any interest in hockey whatsoever, you owe it a try. It remains a brilliant game.



MicroLeague Baseball

Like *Wayne Gretzky II*, *MicroLeague Baseball: The Manager's Challenge* is also an upgrade of an existing game. New features include animated graphics, additional player statistics, and a menu system that offers more play possibilities than earlier versions. The result is a game that's more colorful and more realistic, but inevitably a little slower to play.

The new game was released at exactly the right time — just before the start of the baseball season. Although this is the traditional time to release baseball simulations, *MicroLeague Baseball* happened to

be the only new game to hit the market this year. It reached the stores at the very moment when baseball fans with personal computers feel the urge to take the computerized field. Some fans are waiting to see what *Earl Weaver Baseball 2.0* will be like before deciding which game to buy, but in all probability you'll want to see both. They're so different that direct comparisons aren't really valid.

In some ways, *MicroLeague Baseball* hasn't changed much. For example, the graphics still aren't spectacular. Like *Wayne Gretzky II*, it doesn't offer VGA graphics (your VGA screen will revert to EGA). But the game play has improved considerably, and so has the number of options. *MicroLeague Baseball* also remains a relatively fast game to play — one of its options, in fact, is a roughly 20-second stats-only game. It's also very successful at translating statistics into on-field play.

While playing against the computer in the normal game mode, you're presented with a series of defensive menus when you're pitching and offensive menus when you're at bat. Defensive options let you pick off, pitch out, pitch around, or pitch aggressively. You also have full control over the positions of your outfielders and infielders (including the option of playing behind the runner at first base). After selecting a pitching option, you then decide which pitch you'll throw.

Batters, similarly, must decide what kind of hit they'll try for, and then try to anticipate the type of pitch. It's all a game of second-guessing, just like the real thing.

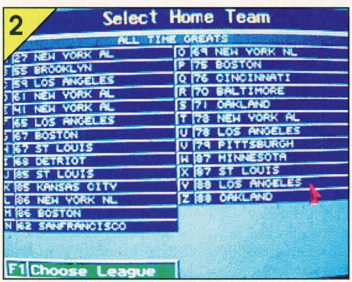
In the final analysis, do these three sports simulations succeed as entertaining games? Yes, but to different degrees. *The Dream Team* offers some strong ideas about defending against and planning high-level key action, but you may miss the full-scale game. *Wayne Gretzky II* is a rich simulation of full-game hockey, but is weaker on individual player skills. And *MicroLeague Baseball*, like *Wayne Gretzky II*, provides the manager's viewpoint without letting you get close to the players. Still, all three games do what they're designed to do, and the only way you'll be disappointed in any of them is if you wanted something else entirely.

1 A goal is scored early in the third period. This one was a wrap-around into the far corner, as the forward eluded his chasers.

2 *MicroLeague Baseball: The Manager's Challenge*: There are plenty of great teams to choose from, but why not see if we can re-create the Dodger magic of '88. Kirk Gibson, anyone?

3 Here they are — Gibson against Stewart, ready for a rematch of their ninth-inning showdown.

4 The running coach menu lets you choose your aggressiveness options. Let's try for an extra base if the ball heads for right field.



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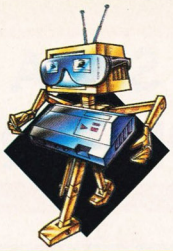


SEGA PLAYERS

Centurion and King's Bounty

Matthew A. Firme

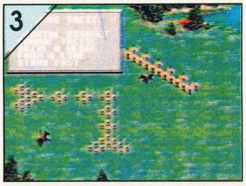
Might makes right — that's an undeniable truth in the cases of the latest two Genesis titles we've seen. Both *Centurion* and *King's Bounty*, from Electronic Arts, cast you in the role of a tough guy in a rough world. In the case of *Centurion*, you're an ambitious Roman military man with dreams of an empire. In *King's Bounty*, you're the royal bounty hunter. The situations are different, but both games demand that you assemble powerful armies and don't hesitate to use them.

Defender of Rome

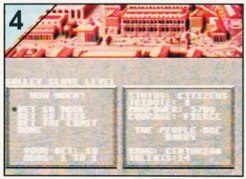
Centurion is based on one of Electronic Arts' popular computer titles. It's a military strategy game set in Rome, 275 B.C. At that time, Rome wasn't a great empire; it was

merely the capital of Italia, one of many small provinces clustered around the Mediterranean Sea. You are a young centurion, sworn to defend Rome. But you are also ambitious.

At the beginning of the game, you command a single legion of infantry. Your legion, currently stationed in Italia, can move into one adjacent country during each turn. Of course, most of your neighbors will resent an entire Roman legion crossing their borders. They'll usually threaten to destroy your legion if you don't withdraw. Do you stay and engage the enemy in what could be a long and damaging battle, or do you flee back to Italia? If you're the kind of centurion who'll one day rule the known world as Caesar, you know what choice to make.



When you choose to stay and fight, the game shifts from a map of the Mediterranean to a battle screen. This is the most important screen in the game, because it's on the battlefield that you'll decide your destiny. Before either you or your enemy's armies appear on



2
ALPES
AS BRITOMET AND THE SOLDIERS OF RAMON FOR THEIR TEMERITY.
VINDELIC, THE LEADER OF ALPES, OFFERS A GREETING:
"THE TRIBES OF THESE MOUNTAINS NEED YOU NOT."
GO TO WAR
WITHDRAW
NEGOTIATION

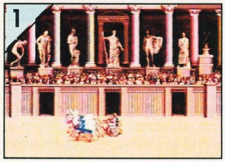
1 As *Centurion* begins, you've got an entire world to conquer.

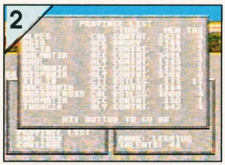
2 In the Alps region, your troops are met by barbarians. Despite your attempts at reason, they just won't listen. You'll have to convince them on the battlefield.

3 The battle screens are an important part of *Centurion*. Here, your army (right) prepares a wedge formation to slice through the barbarians' front lines.

4 Holding chariot races can increase your wealth and reputation — but only if you win. To help insure a victory, you can resort to bribery or even drug your horses.

the screen, you get to choose your formation. Remember, these are the days before rifles and guided missiles; the two armies meet face to face, moving toward one another like two football teams after a kickoff. The formations you choose are vital to your success in battle.





1 Your chariot rolls into the amphitheater.

2 Check your provinces often. If your subjects grow angry, you may have a rebellion on your hands.

3 *King's Bounty*: Each of the four characters has different characteristics. Moham is a fine leader and is capable of commanding large armies.

4 Hack the Rogue is one of the first villains you'll bring to justice.

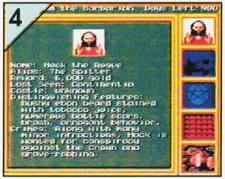
Each Roman legion and enemy army is rated for courage, from "panicky" to "fierce." Except for the size of an army, the courage rating is the most important information you can learn about an enemy. A weak army won't stand and fight long before its soldiers panic and flee the battlefield. A fierce army fights much longer.

At first, your single legion is fierce and at full strength, numbering 4,200 foot soldiers. You can move into any adjacent country to seek glory for Rome. When you do, your scouts bring you information about the country's wealth and the size and ferocity of its army. Then the country's leader rides out to meet you. You can try to negotiate with him to form an alliance, but more often you'll end up going to war.

When you've beaten an enemy army, you occupy that country. You can recruit its men to replace your own fallen soldiers, and most importantly, you can tax the people. *Centurion* places a lot of importance on money, as the Romans did. The more provinces you conquer, the more money you'll earn each turn.

Back in Rome, your actions are scrutinized. You are judged according to how many lands you conquer and how much tax money you raise. Also important is how you uphold the honor of Rome. If you don't hold games to entertain the people in the countries you've conquered, and if you're unable to maintain order, you'll be passed over for promotions.

And promotion is the name of the game. You begin as a mere centurion. But if you're aggressive and fearless in battle — and if you can occupy every country on the map — you'll one day become Caesar. In *Centurion*, only the strong survive.



Bounty Hunting

King's Bounty is one of the first Genesis games released under Electronic Arts' affiliated label program. This arrangement lets smaller software companies sell their games through EA's large distribution network.

Designed by New World

SEGA PLAYERS

1 In the court of King Maximus, you can recruit soldiers or seek an audience with the king. Sometimes he'll promote you.

2 On the battle screens, each player takes a turn.

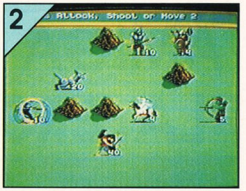
3 Sailing is often easier than fighting. In this case, you've avoided those evil ghosts and have found the Ring of Power.

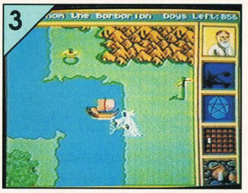
4 Castle Nilslag is home to Rob the Pirate. But your contract is for Murray the Miser, so leave Rob alone.

Computing, *King's Bounty* is a fantasy role-playing game based on an earlier computer version. The character you play is loyal to King Maximus, who has ruled your world's four continents with the Sceptre of Order. But a gang of villains, led by the hideous Arech Dragonbreath, has stolen the Sceptre from Maximus. Now the world is a splintered, feuding place. Evil beasts, both human and nonhuman, roam the four continents.

Choosing from four different characters, you must help the king recover his sceptre. To do this, you have to get a map to the sceptre — and the only known map has been cut into 25 pieces. Seventeen different villains, all lackeys of Dragonbreath, hold 17 of the pieces. The other eight are buried with treasures and scattered across the continents.

The game consists largely of hunting down the villains, storming their castles, and bringing them to justice. In this way, you gradually accumulate pieces of the map leading to the sceptre. For each





villain you subdue, you're paid a bounty. But you can collect the bounty only if you hold a contract on the villain. If you storm a castle occupied by a villain on which you don't hold a contract, he goes free.

Of course, there's more to it than just walking up to a castle and starting to fight. You must be sure your army is strong enough to do the job. And just as your king pays you bounty money and an allowance, you have to pay your troops.

You also have to worry about the size of your army. You can lead up to five different groups (peasants, archers, and pikemen, for example) at a time, but the number of soldiers in each group depends on your leadership ability.

It may sound confusing, but the beauty of *King's Bounty* is that it isn't. *King's Bounty* is designed to let you make progress and explore the world right from the start. Unlike many role-playing games, this one doesn't force you into one battle after another. You can rent a ship and explore the shores and rivers of all four continents in safety, and from your ship you can see treasures, enemies, and castles. You can leave the vessel to explore or gather treasure, and get back on board if an enemy threatens you.

Of course, you'll have to fight sooner or later. After all, the future of your world is at stake. But the relatively infrequent combat should please both beginning role players and veterans weary of dungeons filled with enemies.

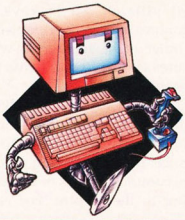
In Other News...

Another title coming soon from Electronic Arts is a Genesis version of the computer science-fiction game *Starflight*. It won't be ready

for a while, but if it's as good as the original computer version, it could be one of this year's hottest titles.

And speaking of hot, we've been playing a preliminary version of *Sonic the Hedgehog* from Sega of America. It's still a long way from finished, but it has enough to convince us that *Sonic* is headed for stardom. Watch for a full review in a future issue!

GP

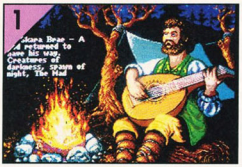


AMIGA PLAYERS

Bard's Tale III and *Hoverforce*

Sheldon Leemon

Just as the second child in the family ends up wearing a lot of hand-me-downs, the second most popular game computer ends up with a lot of hand-me-down software. Even though IBM compatibles aren't very well suited to game playing, there are so darn many of them out there that most software companies can't help but produce their games for the PCs first, and then translate the games to other computers when they get around to it. When the Amiga version is a direct port of a game that was designed for PC graphics, the results can be pretty disappointing. But when a game is either completely redone for the Amiga, or is designed for VGA graphics from the start, the chances for success are much better.



The Bard's Tale III: Thief of Fate from Electronic Arts is a typical PC translation. Not only are the graphics and player interface almost unchanged from the PC version, but the PC version they were copied from is also more than two years old. That means the game isn't even state-of-the-art on PCs any more, let alone on the Amiga. Some limited mouse support has been added, allowing you to move and make menu selections without using the keyboard. But after making a number of wrong selections with the mouse, I went back to using the keyboard anyway.

On the other hand, the Bard's Tale series is a classic, and many Amiga fans will no doubt be overjoyed at the appearance of this installment, however late.

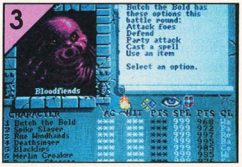
When *Thief of Fate* gets underway, the town of Skara Brae has been destroyed. Your party of heroes must stop the mad god who wrecked the city from destroying the rest of the world. You can either import your characters from previous Bard's Tale games, or create new ones from scratch, choosing your characters' race, class, and gender. Once you've set up your party, you must conquer a series of challenges by exploring 80 dungeons in seven dimensions, fighting hundreds of monsters, discovering objects, avoiding traps, and learning spells. In short, *Thief of Fate* has all of the elements that made *Dungeon Master* an Amiga classic — but without the sophisticated player interface.

Although the game has enough challenges to satisfy the veteran dungeon dweller, beginners should be able to wander around the Wilderness and Skara Brae (the first levels) without getting killed off too quickly. In the Wilderness, look for the Shrine, where your characters can be healed or resurrected. (You'll find it to the west and south of the refugee camp.) In Skara Brae, look for the Review Board (keep going to the east and north). You'll need to check in there periodically to get promotions and learn new spells. The new automatic mapping feature doesn't allow you to keep the map on the screen while the game proceeds, but since the game multitasks well on the Amiga, you might want to use the Workbench ScreenDump program to print out a permanent copy of the map.

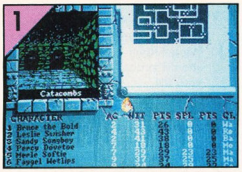
1 *Bard's Tale III: Thief of Fate*: The title screen is as close as this game comes to full-screen graphics.

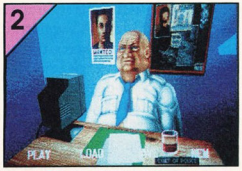
2 As in many fantasy role-playing games, the abilities of your characters vary according to their race, gender, occupation, and experience.

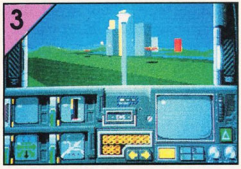
3 During each round of battle, each warrior can choose his or her own course of action.

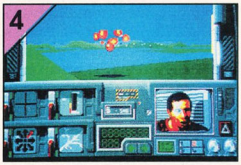


AMIGA PLAYERS









1. The automatic mapping is a welcome addition to *Thief of Fate*.
2. *Hoverforce*: Each mission starts with orders from the Chief.
3. Details like this street lamp make the first-person perspective graphics very lifelike.
4. The evil Alterant grimaces when you blow up one of his ships.
5. If you use up all five lives, it's back to the drawing board.

Unlike *Thief of Fate*, Accolade's *Hoverforce* represents the new wave of PC translations now coming to the Amiga. Since the PC version was designed for the new VGA displays, the graphics are as good as those in most Amiga games. And since many of the latest PC computers come with a mouse, *Hoverforce* was designed from the ground up to use mouse controls. As a result, this game doesn't look or feel like a PC port. In fact, despite my lack of enthusiasm for simulated 3-D shoot-em-ups, I got hooked on *Hoverforce* pretty quickly.

The drug-chase theme of *Hoverforce* can be summed up in a simple phrase: If it moves, shoot it. When you destroy one of the drug boss's henchmen, he leaves behind either money or a drug canister, which you can pick up for evidence. If you collect enough evidence, you can shoot down the Alterant's Hovercar to finish the level.

Your wild chase through the city is viewed from a first-person perspective, as in a flight simulator. Although most of the scenery is made up of the usual shaded boxes, little details like street lamps and trees add a strong touch of realism. The mouse controls are quite responsive and feel very natural once you get used to them. You move the mouse right or left to turn, push the left mouse button to accelerate, and the right button to fire. Usually I prefer a joystick to the mouse, but after a short while it felt as if I'd been driving a HoverKill 1000 for years.

The first level is relatively easy on you while you're learning the controls. After that, however, things get tougher, so you have to concentrate on making quick kills. Although the instructions don't mention the hazards you'll encounter, you'll soon find some things you'll want to avoid. For instance, don't pick up the black drug canisters, avoid the flashing red zone, and don't try to skim over the water with your unmodified Stinger.

When you pick up enough cash, you can buy some neat new equipment at the nearest store. The good stuff costs a lot, though, so save your money unless you need to replenish your shields.

As long as PC compatibles outsell Amigas, we'll be seeing lots of secondhand games for our favorite computer. As PCs become more civilized (or Amigatized), however, it becomes more and more difficult to answer the question: Is it real, or is it a PC port?

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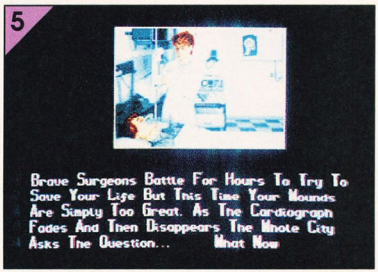
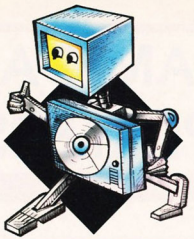

5
Brave Surgeons Battle For Hours To Try To
Save Your Life But This Time Your Wounds
Are Simply Too Great. As The Cardiograph
Fades And Then Disappears The Whole City
Asks The Question...
What Now



TURBO PLAYERS

TaleSpin

Neil Randall

TaleSpin is the latest example of a popular TV cartoon series that's been translated into a videogame. The idea behind such games is a good one: Rather than create a brand-new hero, such as Mario or Bonk, the game designers use a character who's already popular, worrying only about what that character will do. Unfortunately, this idea sometimes doesn't work very well. Rather than inventing a character to fit the videogame, the designers must create a videogame to fit the character.

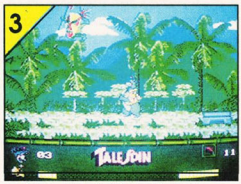
In *TaleSpin*, you take command of Baloo the bear (whose name, by the way, comes from Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*). Baloo's task is to piece together a map that leads to a treasure. The map is in five pieces, and Baloo has access to four of them when the game starts. Each piece of the map represents a different area, and at the end of each area is a boss creature who must be defeated. If Baloo defeats the boss, he gets that piece of the map. Baloo must work through the four available stages in order to reach the fifth, where the treasure is hidden.

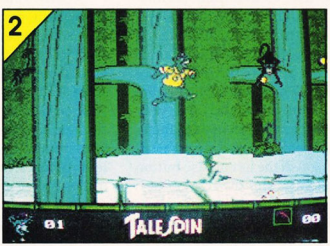
Basically, *TaleSpin* is a side-scrolling jumping game. Baloo walks horizontally across the screen, and each stage has a different background. The first four stages include an aerodrome, an arctic landscape, a jungle with cliffs and rivers, and an underwater grotto. (You can play these stages in any order you want.) At various times, Baloo has to climb over rocks, cross bridges, hop across rivers, jump over cliffs, throw snowballs, and even shoot a water pistol. There are crevices to fall into, tottering bridges to cross, and hostile creatures to jump over, duck under, and knock out of the way. Alligator heads become stepping-stones across rivers, and mischievous monkeys throw things at you from above. Although the game doesn't have quite as much variety as, say, *Bonk's Adventure*,

1 This screen lets you choose the stage you want to play next. The Watusi River Valley (the jungle) should probably be second on your list.

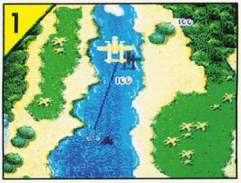
2 In the Watusi River Valley, the monkeys in the trees try to bean you from above, but you can shoot them out of their lairs.

3 The evil-looking thing at the top left is the Watusi boss. Keep on your toes, and keep firing. Try not to let him hit you.





TURBO PLAYERS



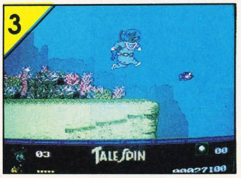
there's enough to keep fans of the TV show happily occupied.

The graphics are very good. Baloo looks like Baloo, and he's at his most irresistible when you stop and duck — he squats down and wraps his paws over his head. If you leave him idle for more than a few seconds, he'll turn toward you and tap his foot impatiently. Each screen has strong colors and lots of background detail, and the effect is almost three-dimensional.

There's also a bonus stage that's

nothing short of spectacular. If you reach it, you'll get an overhead view of a lush forest down below as you "sky surf." In *TaleSpin*, sky-surfing consists of being towed behind an airplane, almost like a water-skier. The goal is to pick up bonus points by flying over numbered targets. The graphics are rather simple, but the screens are uncluttered and Baloo's objectives are clear.

Baloo is easy to control. You move him with the directional pad (the only option is to walk, not run), and jump by pressing button I. With button II you can throw things or fire your weapon, depending on which area you're in. And that's it, except for the bonus



screen, in which you simply move Baloo from side to side in an attempt to gather points. The controls are well-executed, but the lack of additional options may disappoint some experienced gamers.

One thing's for sure — *TaleSpin* is a manageable game. While other videogames seem to be growing larger all the time, with more things to do and more stages to survive, *TaleSpin* takes a simpler approach. The first four stages are short (a couple of them extremely so), and once you master them, you can whisk through them again quickly. It should hold the interest of younger players — the most obvious audience for the game — but may not encourage experienced

1 At the end of each stage, you can "sky surf" for bonus points. You can also find an extra life, so guide your plane well.

2 Underwater, on the Great Simeon Reef, avoiding obstacles is the real trick. Particularly harmful are the blowfish and electric eels.

3 There are some treasures on the reef, but watch out! Lots of heads poke up to do you in.

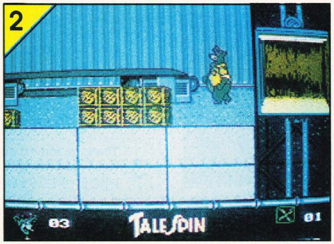
4 This ugly jellyfish is the reef's boss monster. He's more annoying than dangerous, as long as you keep your wits about you and keep jumping.

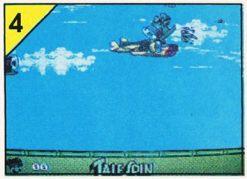
5 In the Ice Caves of Thembira, the trick to getting past the penguins is to let them leap over you. Just don't duck too soon.

players to continue to the end. Too bad, because the game isn't that easy all the way through.

And that brings up an important question about *TaleSpin*: Is it suited to its intended audience? Graphically, with its colorful and endearing cartoon characters, it's perfect. But it's far from an easy game to play. It's doubtful that

TURBO PLAYERS





1 The boss in the Ice Caves requires concentration. Keep ducking when he throws, then leap up and fire back. You'll get him eventually.

2 Once leaving the elevator in the Aerodrome, Baloo comes to what is by far the most difficult part of the game. These conveyor belts are tough!

3 Just because you've got all the pieces of the map doesn't mean your treasure hunt is over. Next you head into the skies, and you'll face some very difficult airplanes.

4 Shooting down a plane is one thing; flying into one is quite another. But don't worry, even after you knock them down, you'll still have more to do.

anyone under age eight or nine is going to get very far at first, and it's highly unlikely that anyone that young will get past the hardest stage, the Aerodrome. It would be nice if the game had multiple difficulty levels, but no choice is offered. Parents who buy this game for younger children would do well to spend some time teaching them to play.

Here are some hints that may help. The first four stages are the Ice Caves of Thembira, the Watusi River Valley, the Great Simeon Reef, and the Aerodrome. Try them in this order, because the Ice Caves are by far the easiest and the Aerodrome clearly the most difficult. Keep in mind at all times that you can shoot straight up and also upward at an angle, and that you can even shoot while jumping. But sometimes shooting isn't the answer. You can simply duck under some of the penguins, monkeys, and blowfish.

To defeat the boss at the end of the jungle stage (the Watusi River Valley), keep moving and keep firing. When he flies over you, shoot straight up. Don't give him any rest.

To defeat the jellyfish at the end of the underwater stage (the Great Simeon Reef), jump to shoot and then duck. Incidentally, you can move very quickly through this entire stage simply by refusing to fight the underwater creatures that attack you. Just dodge under them or jump over them.

When you confront the boss of the arctic world (the Ice Caves of Thembira), move right up to the ice ledge and duck when the boss throws his snowballs. Then jump up and shoot once, landing and ducking again.

Finally, be sure to set both of your control buttons on turbo-fire. That way, firing will be automatic, and on at least two levels that's essential.

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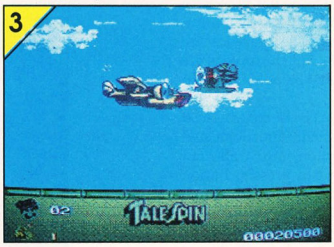
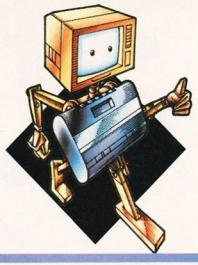




ATARI SAFARI

Lower Prices Boost Sales

Tom R. Halfhill

It looks as if Atari made a smart move when it slashed the price of the Lynx last winter. Atari says that sales of the hand-held videogame system have increased dramatically, and the game cartridges are selling faster, too.

What's even more impressive is that the upturn came at a time when the U.S. economy was in a recession and consumer sales were down. Despite those obstacles, the Lynx sold better last winter than at any time since it first hit the market in late 1989.

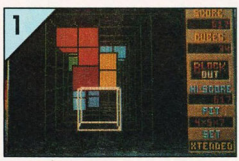
Atari's price cut, which took effect in January, reduced the standard Lynx package from $179 to $149. That package includes an AC adapter, a Comlynx cable, a copy of *California Games*, and a coupon for another game cartridge. In addition, Atari began offering the basic Lynx without any accessories for $99 — the lowest price ever for a color hand-held.

In February, the first full month in which the new price was effective, more Lynxes were sold than during the last *three* months of 1990! That's remarkable when you consider that the holiday shopping season is generally the biggest sales period for most products, and especially for toys. Yet more Lynxes were sold in February than during any other month in its history.

Atari won't divulge actual unit sales, but did provide this breakdown: Slightly more than half of the Lynxes sold were the basic $99 systems. As expected, the new low-ball price — only $10 more than a Game Boy — is attracting lots of new customers.

More Lynxes mean more games are being sold, too. Interestingly, Atari reports that sales of *Blue Lightning*, a jet combat game, rocketed 300 percent when the Persian Gulf war began.

Another interesting point is that all of the Lynxes sold last winter were the "old" units. The new, redesigned Lynx (covered in the April issue of *Game Player's*) wasn't scheduled to appear in stores until late spring. By then, the inventory of old units was expected to be sold out.



1 *Blockout* adds a third dimension to the falling-block puzzle of *Tetris*. The goal is to form unbroken layers at the bottom of a walled pit.

Blockout

One of the latest Lynx games we've been playing (oops, testing) is Atari's *Blockout*, a fast-action puzzler that's almost a direct translation of a 1989 computer game from California Dreams. *Blockout* is actually a *Tetris* derivative, but it adds a new twist — the *third* dimension.

In *Tetris*, colored blocks gradually fall from the top of the screen, and you rotate them clockwise or counterclockwise to form layers at the bottom of the screen. But in *Blockout*, the falling blocks are more complex three-dimensional shapes, and you have to fit them into the bottom of a pit. In addition, you can rotate the blocks in *six* different directions: clockwise and counterclockwise around all three axes (known as x, y, and z in geometry).

The result is a quantum leap in complexity. Each new block presents a new problem in spatial reasoning. The blocks appear as transparent wire-frame outlines while they're falling, then turn into solid colors when they hit bottom. Each unfinished layer is a different color (which, by the way, makes this game very difficult if you're color-blind).

Blockout offers several options. You can choose from three different sets of blocks, and the most difficult set includes some oddly shaped horrors that seem impossible to fit together. You can also change the size of the pit, pick from three different rotation speeds, turn the sound on or off, watch a demo, refer to a help screen, and play a practice game.

If you like *Tetris*-style games, you'll find that *Blockout* adds a whole new dimension to an old favorite.

GP

NINTENDO GAME OF THE MONTH

Jeff Lundrigan

INDIANA JONES and the LAST CRUSADE

Indiana Jones, professor of archeology, was taking a break from his classes when a strange package, apparently from his father, arrived in the mail. Indy hadn't seen his dad for some years, and getting a package from the elder Dr. Jones was more than a little unusual.

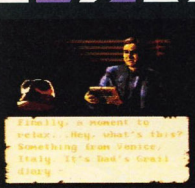
Things got even more unusual when Indy opened the package. Inside was Dad's Grail diary, a record of every scrap of information his father had collected in his lifelong search for the Holy Grail. Moments later, Indy received word that his dad had in fact been taken prisoner by the Nazis. Indy then realized that his father had sent him the diary for safekeeping.

Indy dropped everything, including his own personal quest to recover the fabled Cross of Coronado, and left for Castle Brunwald to rescue his dad.

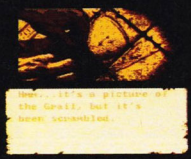
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is closely patterned after the events of the hit movie. A unique feature of the game, however, is that you can play through the events in any order — you can even go straight for the Grail if you want to. You're better off doing a few things first though, like rescuing Dad and going to Venice for some important clues.

Indiana Jones combines this unique approach with challenging game play. Excellent graphics and smooth, no-flicker animation top off this genuinely interesting and worthwhile gaming experience.

Taito, 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090.



Indy takes a break from teaching archeology to discover a mysterious package. If this is Dad's diary, what happened to Dad? Better go to Venice and find out.



In Venice, Indy finds the first piece of the puzzle — an ancient parchment with a picture of the Grail, but the picture has been damaged by the passage of time.

Solving the Grail puzzle is exactly like solving a child's tile puzzle. The earlier in the game you go to Venice, the easier the puzzle. If you go there first, you can solve it in 12 moves.

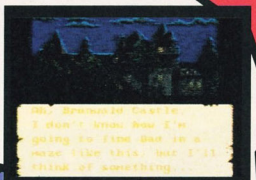
Next, recover the Cross of Coronado and fulfill Indy's personal quest. Indy's whip has the advantage of killing enemies with one blow, but it only works at a very specific range.

Another good technique is to get an enemy to chase you by running away, then do a flying kick against the wall — you'll bounce, spin around, and knock the enemy flat.

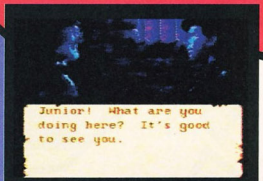
All you have to do is beat up a few sailors, kill the ship's captain, and finally, after a 20-year search, Indy has recovered the Cross of Coronado!

Once you've obtained the cross, Indy will jump ship — and it's a good thing he does, too.

The castle is a maze, but it's not that large, and each level has a different marker on the wall — so be systematic in your search. Any tricks you used to fight the sailors will work against the guards as well.

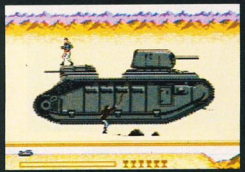


First, the good news: Sallah found out where Indy's dad is. Now the bad news: He's being held by the Nazis in the castle Brunwald.

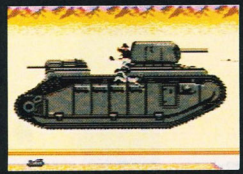


Dad is being held in a secret room behind the fireplace. Once you've found him, getting out of the castle is automatic.

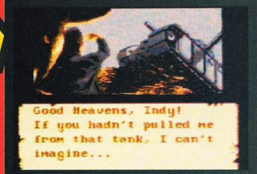
You're looking for this room. Sit on the chair and it will reveal a passage through the fireplace.



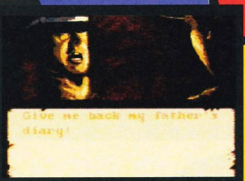
In the desert of Iskenderun, Marcus is also being held by the Nazis — inside a tank. If Indy is knocked off the treads, he gets right back on, but it will cost you a life.



The soldiers will come out of the tank one at a time, and they always hop off the left side of the turret. Stand just to the right and hit them with a flying kick as they land on the treads.



Once all the soldiers in the tank have been defeated, Marcus will come out and hop off the back of the tank. He's glad to be rescued, but you've still got work to do.



If you fail during any stage, you'll lose Dad's diary and you'll have to go to Berlin. Getting the diary is easy, but escaping with it is probably the most difficult part of the game.

The road from Berlin is littered with dangerous obstacles. These roadblocks can be easily leaped over, but watch out for the machine guns! They fire down the middle and sides of the road.

The road forks eight times. One path usually leads to a chasm that must be jumped; the other leads to the same chasm but has no place to land on the other side — certain doom. The safe paths are (in order): left, right, right, right, left, right, right, left.

The road occasionally starts to zigzag, with gun turrets on the zags. If you slow down for the curves, they're likely to blast you, so run the zigzag at top speed and jump over them.

Enemy motorcycles will try to run you off the road. You can bump them back, flail at them with your whip, or, most satisfying of all, jump and land on them.

Toward the end of the stage, you'll find tanks parked in the road, flanked by a pair of machine guns. They're easy to jump though, and their fire pattern is the same as a roadblock's.

Made it! Now you've got Dad's diary again — time to go after the Grail.

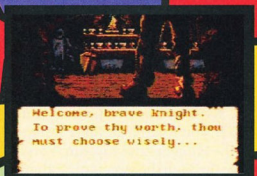
The Grail lies deep in the heart of a hidden temple, guarded by three deadly challenges.

This is why Dad's diary is so important: It shows the safe path across the "Footsteps of God," and also gives the proper symbol for the "Leap from the Lion's Head."

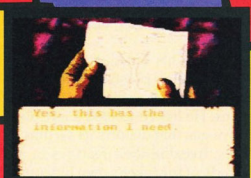
The only catch to the Footsteps of God is that you have to be quick — if your torch burns out, you'll be in total darkness. When it's dark, you might still make it, if you're *really* lucky.

Leap from tile to tile and spell "Jehovah" (which starts with a J, not an I as in the film) — if you forget how to spell, you'll go right through the floor and the game will be over.

The Leap from the Lion's Head is a leap of faith. Stand on the tile with the same symbol as in Dad's diary and jump. If you don't have Dad's diary, pick a tile and hope it's the right one.

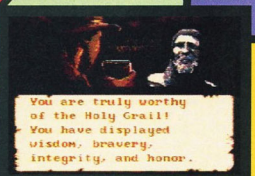


Assuming you survive, you'll be met by the knight who guards the Grail, and he'll present you with the final challenge — choosing the right Grail.



Here's where the sketch you got in Venice is handy — it shows the shape of the Grail. If the sketch is only partial, you can try to remember details from the original puzzle.

The Grail's shape depends on four things: the bowl (round or V-shaped), the handles (curved or S-shaped), the lip (fluted or smooth), and the base (which comes in three different styles).



Choose the right Grail, and you'll be hailed as a hero and become part of the Grail legend. Choose poorly, and you'll be dust on the floor.

GP

SEGA GENESIS GAME OF THE MONTH

BATMAN

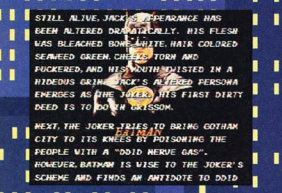
Matthew A. Firme

Gotham City is planning its bicentennial celebration. The dark, towering skyscrapers of Gotham's famous skyline are being sandblasted clean; the streets are hosed and washed; and banners hung everywhere proclaim the city's 200th anniversary. Local businesses, the news media, and the city government are working together to paint a festive facade over the gloomy metropolis.

But in his hideout at the old Axis Chemical plant, the infamous Joker is at work on his own twisted plans. He has concocted a terrible nerve gas that distorts its victims' faces, freezing their features in a parody of the Joker's own hideous grin. Death follows quickly. And now, while the eyes of the nation are focused on Gotham City and its celebration, the Joker moves to unleash his nerve gas on the innocent people of the city.

As Batman, the Caped Crusader, you'll battle the Joker's thugs in the Flugelheim Museum. You'll race through the streets of Gotham City in your Batmobile, and take to the skies in the Batwing. Finally, you'll climb the towering Gotham Cathedral to face the Joker himself.

Also available for Nintendo and the Game Boy. Sunsoft, 11165 Knott Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630.


STILL ALIVE, JACK'S APPEARANCE HAS BEEN ALTERED DRAMATICALLY. HIS FLESH WAS BLEACHED BONE-WHITE, HAIR COLORED SEAWEED GREEN, CHEESE TORN AND PUCKERED, AND HIS MOUTH TWISTED IN A HIDEOUS GRIN. JACK'S ALTERED PERSONA EMERGES AS THE JOKER, HIS FIRST DIRTY DEED IS TO DOWN CATSSOM.
NEXT, THE JOKER TRIES TO BRING GOTHAM CITY TO ITS KNEES BY POISONING THE PEOPLE WITH A "DOID NERVE GAS". HOWEVER, BATMAN IS WISE TO THE JOKER'S SCHEME AND FINDS AN ANTIDOTE TO DOID

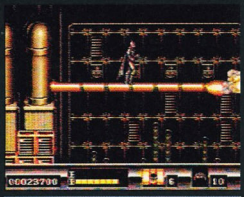
Digitized scenes from the movie highlight the story of Gotham City's celebration and the Joker's evil plan.

Like a specter, Batman drops to the streets of Gotham City. The thugs who stand in your way in stage 1 aren't very tough, so this is a good opportunity to practice your moves.

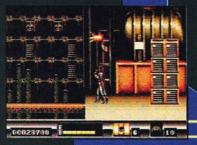
Use the low side-kick often. By crouching and striking with a low kick, Batman can often duck under an enemy's attack.

These thugs don't have the sense to come in out of the rain. You'll have to show them how dangerous a thunderstorm can be.

The Boxer is the boss of stage 1. He's powerful, but sluggish. Jump to avoid his charges, then throw punches as soon as you land. Save your Batarangs for tougher enemies.

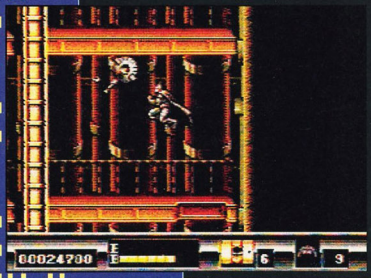


The abandoned Axis Chemical factory is a dangerous place. This pipe can suddenly burst beneath your feet, so be ready to jump.

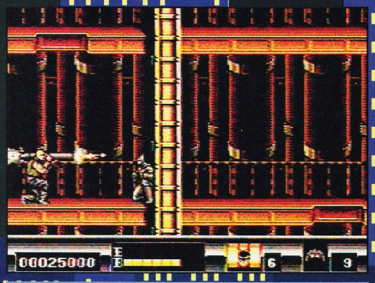


You'll need the Bathook to reach the pipe above your head.

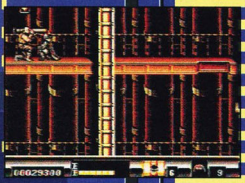
Laser cannons are placed all over the factory. Duck to avoid their deadly laser blasts, but keep an eye out for sneak attacks.



Punch the laser cannon to destroy it *before* you start down this corridor.



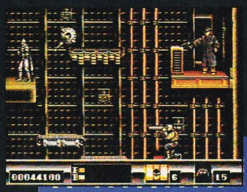
When this bazooka-toting thug comes into view, keep a close eye on him and be ready to duck. If he blasts you with his weapon, you'll lose a life.



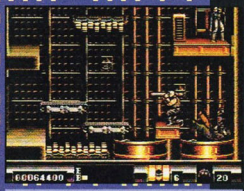
Watch for power-ups. The heart above this bazooka man will restore your life meter.

BATMAN

Exploding pipes are always a danger. If you lose your footing here, you might plummet to your death.



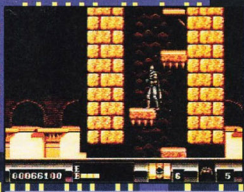
There, in the upper right corner, is the archcriminal Jack Napier! Somersault to the center platform, then again toward Napier.



Batman reaches Napier, knocking him off the platform and into the chemical vat below. The corrosive chemicals turn Napier into the Joker.

Watch out for these guys in the Flugelheim Museum. Most are carrying guns, although they're a bit slow on the draw. Remember, you can defeat some bad guys merely by jumping on them.

Axel, the ax-wielding terror of the Flugelheim Museum, hurls his hatchets with deadly force. Move in close and use the low kick.



It looks easy, but leaping and climbing up this spiny shaft can be lethal. Be sure to grab the one-up at the bottom right corner of the shaft!

Another burly ax-man awaits you at the top of the shaft. Close in on him quickly, striking with a barrage of punches.

Sinbad attacks, scimitars flying. Watch his pattern — each time he rushes toward you, leap over him. When he lands, strike with both fists.

As the Joker watches from a balcony, Crusher enters to challenge Batman. Crusher's most lethal technique is his flying belly-flop. Fortunately, it's easy to avoid.

Once he's defeated Crusher, the Caped Crusader finds Vicki Vale and whisks her to safety.

In stage 4, you're racing through Gotham City in the Batmobile. Your main weapon is a high-powered machine gun, but you also have a supply of heat-seeking missiles.

Use your missiles to destroy that tank straight ahead. The bombs it tosses at you are especially powerful.

Even in the heart of the city, the Joker's tanks try to stop you. Keep your eyes open for extra missiles.

The nuclear-powered Blaster is waiting for you at the end of the road. Use your missiles, and zigzag in and out of the Blaster's fire.

In the second part of stage 4, you're back on your feet. These white-faced mimes are everywhere, and getting past them requires precise jumping and lightning attacks.

BATMAN

In stage 5, Batman takes to the night sky in his Batwing. Its weapons are the same as the Batmobile's.

Use your jumping attack to knock the mimes from their perches. The stout mimes can breathe fire, so watch out. If you're low on lives, try walking off the edge of this platform. Three one-ups are hidden below.

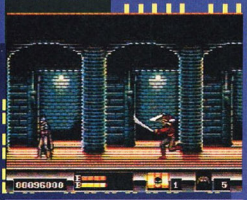
With swords flying, Sinbad's cousin seeks to avenge the mimes. Defeat him as you did Sinbad—leap over him, then attack.

The funny look of these balloons is *very* misleading. They're full of the Joker's deadly nerve gas, and you must destroy them before innocent people are killed.

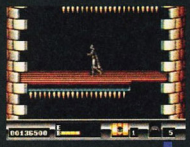
The Joker's Turbo-Attack Copter packs plenty of firepower.

The final stage takes Batman to Gotham Cathedral. Get ready to face some stiff resistance.

Be careful while facing the enemies in this hallway. That spiked ceiling really limits your movement!

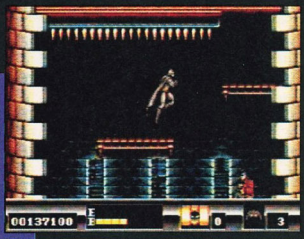


Sinbad is back, and so is each of the other stage bosses. You'll have to fight them all if you hope to find the Joker.



Finally, you've defeated the thugs on the Gotham Cathedral's ground floor. Now it's time to begin the long climb up the bell tower.

The gargoyles in the walls breathe flame, and those red-jacketed toughs hurl dynamite. It seems that someone doesn't want you to climb this tower!



Don't risk leaping into those spikes. Knock that thug off the platform at the right, then use your Bathook to continue the climb.

Start collecting all the Batarangs you can, and don't use any unless you absolutely have to. You'll need them to survive your encounter with the Joker.

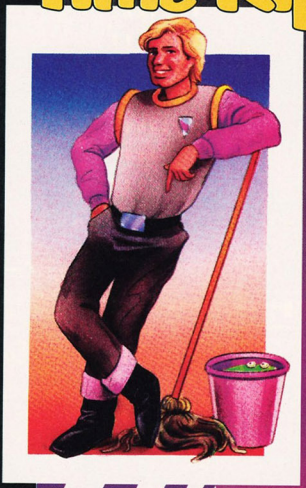
When you reach this platform at the top of the second tower, you'll have to leap blindly as far to the left as you can. Batman will fall down the left wall and land on a ledge leading back to the first tower.

From here on, each move is critical. Even these blocks give way beneath your feet, and a fall now means starting all over again.

At last, you're face-to-face with the Joker! Only one of you can leave Gotham Cathedral alive.

Computer Game of the Month

SPACE QUEST IV: ROGER WILCO and the Time Rippers



"You can't go home again," according to the proverb. Or perhaps in Roger Wilco's case, "You *shouldn't* go home again." Sure, after many years of spacefaring adventures and harrowing brushes with death, a relaxing visit to Roger's home planet, Xenon, would be a nice change of pace. That's not what Roger gets, however, when he's unceremoniously dumped into a time-rip corridor by some guy carrying what looks like a hair dryer with a glandular condition.

Gary Meredith

Roger Wilco pilots his trusty spaceship, the *Aluminum Mallard*, toward the planet Magmetheus in search of some welcome rest and recreation.

As usual, Roger ends up blowing all his buckazoids on drinks for the house. Still, it's a small price to pay for an attentive audience.

Getting into trouble with the Sequel Police is bad enough, but it pales in comparison with the realization that Roger's old nemesis, Sludge Vohaul, is once again out for revenge.

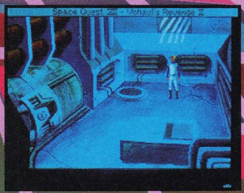
Before Roger can ask for an explanation, he's pushed into a time rip. (It's not nearly as much fun as it looks, kids, so don't try this at home.)

When Roger arrives on his home planet of Xenon, he doesn't get the sort of homecoming he had anticipated. There are no marching bands, beauty queens, or planetary officials to greet him — only the devastation of a once-vital world.

The few remaining denizens of Xenon seem to be under the control of some external force. If you get this close to one of them, you can bet that an extermination drone can't be far behind.

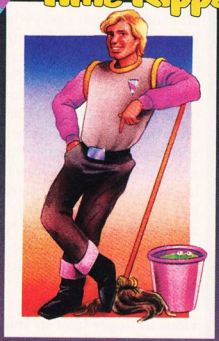
Dropping onto the surface of Xenon, our hero immediately notices a few changes since his last visit — a new shopping center over here, a couple of new restaurants over there, and utter devastation everywhere. With his jaw scraping the fragmented pavement, Roger realizes that someone, or some*thing*, has laid waste to his beloved (well, at least tolerated) Xenon. From the brief discussion he had with a couple of Sequel Police goons just prior to his time trip, he suspects that the perpetrator is none other than his old nemesis, Sludge Vohaul. Now it's up to Roger to prevent further exploitation of his home world.

From the very start, it's obvious to Roger (and to you, of course) that the answers lie somewhere else besides Xenon. But how can Roger escape the shattered planet? And further, how can he escape this time period? A little ingenuity gets Roger into the Sequel Police enclave, where it's a simple matter (yeah, right!) to make off with a time pod. Considering his nearly nonexistent knowledge of time-travel mechanics, it's no surprise that Roger ends up in the most unlikely of places — the planet Estros. Eventually taken prisoner by a comely young amazon, Zondra, who



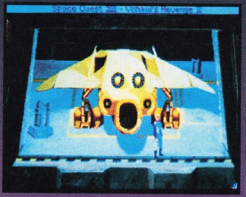
After some fancy footwork and a dazzling rope trick, Roger makes his way to this sewage control station, where he's about to learn about more than waste treatment.

ROGER WILCO and the Time Rippers

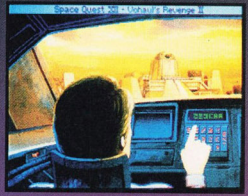


Though his eyes water from the pungent vapors of the sewers, Roger can still recognize a Sequel Police patrol ship when he sees one. The question is, how to board it?

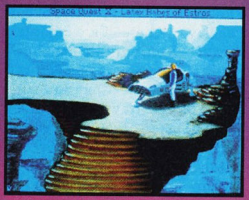
No one ever said that Sequel Police were recruited for their brains. If you'll just head straight for the entry hatch, you should be able to hitch a ride unseen.



It's probably not healthy to linger too long inside the Dome. You'll need to return later, but for now, you must get off Xenon as quickly as possible.



The time pod's controls are fairly simple, but unfortunately, Roger is even simpler. If you keep punching in codes, you should end up in the right place. Just don't forget to jot down the code for Xenon first.



The fabled planet of Estros is populated entirely by women — or so says the legend. But this isn't *Leisure Suit Larry*, so Roger needs to get his mind on the job at hand.

If you insist on standing in the wrong place, you'll have to expect rough treatment from the local fauna. In this case, the bird's interest in you is welcome.

The view from here is great, though the human bones scattered about do detract a bit from your enjoyment. Wait for some company, then make your way out of the nest.

This scene looks like something out of a B-grade movie made on Earth in the 1950s. However, Roger has other things on his mind.

Why can't Roger remember this woman? Time-hopping leads to some interesting paradoxes.

Things don't look good for our hero. All these women seem to be intent on making Roger pay, but for what? Maybe he'll learn something by going along with them, but don't bet on it.

Madame Thoreen doesn't appear to have Roger's best interests at heart, but then you might be bitter, too, if you'd been literally ripped off by a defective depilator.

The sea slug is fearsome, but it can be beaten if you think of it as a big, inflatable beach toy. Use the laser to buy some time.

With the sea slug out of the way, Roger accompanies a grateful Zondra and her girlfriends to that monument of wretched excess and rampant capitalism — the Galaxy Galleria.

vows retribution against Roger for walking out on her (Roger's memory is conveniently fuzzy on this point), he regains her trust, and survives, by defeating a giant sea slug.

On a celebratory shopping trip to the Galaxy Galleria with Zondra and her girlfriends, Roger once again runs afoul of the Sequel Police. But, as always, he comes up with a novel method of escape.

Space Quest IV: Roger Wilco and the Time Rippers is, in the grand tradition of Sierra adventures, a difficult but hilarious game. As always, the items you manage to uncover and how you use them form the basic strategy of the game. To be sure, there are times when you'll probably be banging your head for a solution. But then, that's all part of the fun, isn't it? In particular, note that in a couple of places (such as the Galaxy Galleria), success requires a specific sequence of actions. Thanks to the simple save-game procedure, you can experiment freely.

Space Quest IV may be the ultimate in self-referential gaming. It contains so many references to itself and to other Sierra games (both real and imagined) that it threatens to implode like a neutron star. You actually "visit" other installments in the Space Quest series,

Roger could have sworn Zondra went in here, but there's only the android salesperson and the delightfully animated manikins. A part-time job flipping burgers might help Roger with his fashion problem.

going back to *Space Quest II: Vohaul's Revenge* and jumping ahead to *Space Quest X: Latex Babes of Estros* — all while operating from *Space Quest XII: Vohaul's Revenge II*. There are obviously some warped minds at work here, but they do manage to pull it off.

With the new 256-color VGA graphics, a great soundtrack, and a newly designed icon-based user interface (Sierra veterans may not initially feel comfortable with it), *Space Quest IV* is a prime example of why Sierra is at the top of the computer gaming world. And Sierra's upcoming CD-ROM version of the game should really be breathtaking.

If you haven't played the three earlier installments of Roger Wilco's adventures, you can still enjoy *Space Quest IV*, but you'll miss some of the references. Even though the ending leaves you with the feeling that you've been deliberately set up for yet another sequel, it's still a marvelous game. Who can wait to discover the dark, unspoken secrets of Roger's future — or is it his past? In the Space Quest series, you often don't know whether you're coming or going. But then, that too is part of the fun.

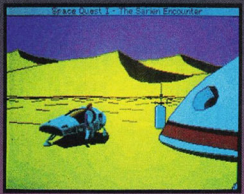
GP

For IBM, Tandy, and compatibles. System requirements: 80286 or faster computer; 640K minimum memory; hard disk; MCGA or VGA graphics; mouse or joystick optional but recommended; major sound boards supported. Supplied on 3.5-inch high-density (1.44-megabyte) floppy disks. Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 485, Coarsegold, CA 93614.

If clothes make the man, what does this dress make Roger? Still, if Roger expects to make that purchase of a lifetime, he'll have to find some way of fooling the automated teller machine.

Once his walk on the wild side is over, Roger needs to find a way off the Galaxy Galleria. The arcade could provide an answer, if he can find the right spot on which to stand.

Considering the physical fitness standards for galactic garbage collectors, it's all Roger can do to swim to the top of the zero-G rec area. Fortunately, Sequel Police standards appear to be even lower.



Just when Roger thought he'd never have to see Ulence Flats again, the stolen time pod deposits him back in time — complete with EGA graphics.

These refugees from a bad Macintosh game are spoiling for a fight. After they toss you out, try giving their parked bikes a shove. You'll need something from the bar before you leave.

Back on Xenon, you've made it into the computer access tunnel, with the help of something special from the jar you've been lugging around. A little smoke might help you align the laser beams.

Roger Wilco and the Time Rippers

The computer complex, you'll discover, was apparently designed by M.C. Escher. The tension is thick enough to cut with a chain saw as Roger steps hesitatingly toward a rendezvous with...what?

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SPECIAL FEATURE:

SUPER MARIO BROS. 3

30 SECRETS REVEALED!

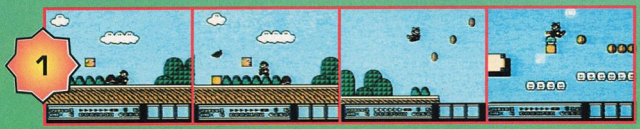
Richard Lashley and Chris Slate

You walk up to a magazine rack, and what do you see? Sure, there's the usual assortment of car and fashion magazines, but what's a funny little Italian plumber doing next to New York's latest fashion model? It looks like Mario may have reached superstar status. *Mario Bros.* games demand coverage like no other titles — many game players gobble up any information they can find about them. And, with each new game, the brothers continue to intrigue audiences everywhere.

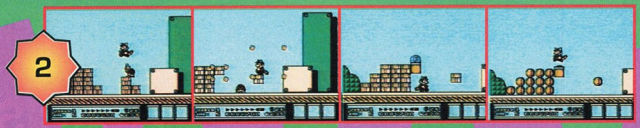
Everyone's looking forward to *Super Mario 4* on the Super NES when it's introduced in just a few months — but let's not get too far ahead of ourselves. Right now, *Super Mario Bros. 3* remains the single best-selling NES videogame.

In response to your constant requests, we're revisiting the crazy, colorful realm of the Mushroom World. And you can count on Bowser and his delinquent kids to be there, spreading their own special brand of mayhem.

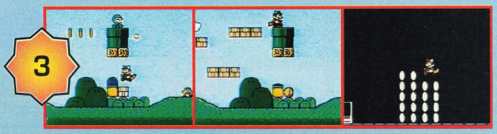
Here's our collection of the 30 *best* hints we've ever offered. We'll show you some of the game's most secret locations of warp whistles, hidden coin rooms, and many more tips Mario can use on his journey. Happy hunting!



Near the beginning of World 1, you'll discover a Super Leaf inside this brick. Catch the leaf, and it transforms you into Raccoon Mario. Now, take a running start to charge up your P-meter (which enables you to fly short distances), and follow this trail of coins into the clouds.



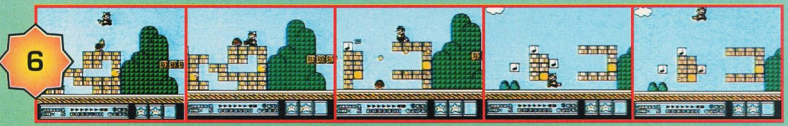
In the magical Mushroom World, many valuable objects are under mounds of brick. As you approach the exit to World 1, use Koopa turtles to shatter these bricks and uncover a small treasure of coins.



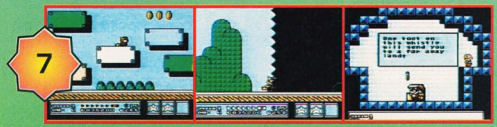
To reach the secret room at the bottom of this pipe in World 1-2, hit the switch block (marked by a P) to change the coins into stairs. Now you can easily slip into the narrow pipe.

At the end of each world, a vertical, jagged edge scrolls onto the screen. When you see it, start running to charge up your P-meter, and launch yourself into the lower left corner of the goal box. Often this gives you a star, and after you collect three consecutive stars, you'll get *five* extra men.

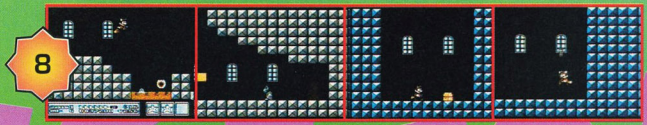
Mario isn't just an expert plumber — he's also a pretty slick cardplayer. After you score 80,000 points, the map screen displays an N-marked spade panel. It's your chance to play a matching game for extra men.



The hidden coin rooms in World 1 are just a preview of the complex, sprawling paths in this game. At the beginning of World 1-3, use a Koopa turtle to slam through these bricks. Jump around on this newly excavated ground, and you'll discover an invisible Jump Block that tosses you into a small fortune.

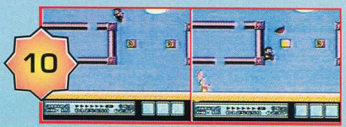


After you enter World 1-3, your pulse suddenly starts to race, the tension builds, and your cute moustache starts to twitch nervously — the first warp whistle must be near. Squat on this block (it takes a few seconds) until you fall through, behind the scenery. Run to the right. You'll wind up in the Toad's house, where the mysterious whistle room is located.



What better place to hide the second warp whistle than in the fortress of World 1? As you approach the exit of the fort, be sure you're Raccoon Mario. With a running start, fly offscreen to the right until the screen stops scrolling. Press up to enter the hidden room where the second warp whistle is located.

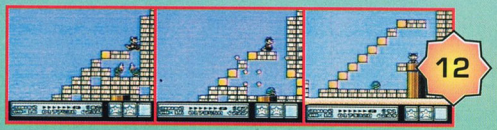
With your two warp whistles, you can skip all the way ahead to World 8. On the map screen, blow the first whistle; a tornado will twist you into the Warp Zone. Next, blow the second whistle, and you enter the Dark Land of World 8 — now that's *moving*.

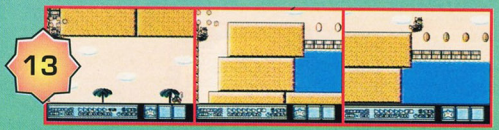


This stone, blasted by centuries of sandstorms in World 2-1, releases a Super Leaf when you bump the side of the stone with your hips.

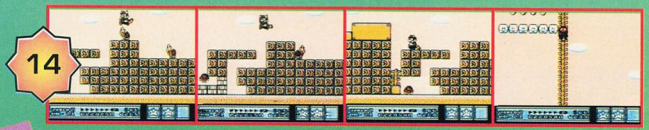
Surrounded by a hot, choking desert, this oasis in World 2-2 offers a cooling dip in a pool. Between these coins is an invisible block containing a one-up mushroom.

Use a Koopa to crumble the blocks surrounding this pipe. It leads to the end of World 2-3, and you'll score hundreds of points in the process.

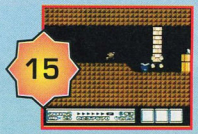




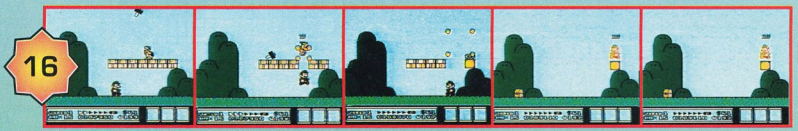
Being Raccoon Mario has its advantages. In World 2-4, use your swishing tail to propel yourself up to this pipe. Squirm into it, and you'll find a room brimming with coins.



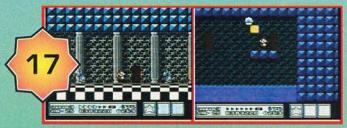
Eating (or, in this case, climbing) vegetables keeps you healthy and rich in World 2-5. Stomp the Koopa, and ram it into these bricks. Then a secret vine climbs into the sky, where you'll find clouds of coins.



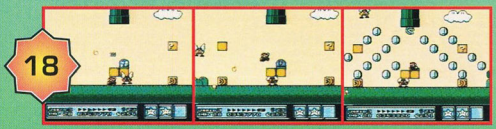
In World 2, it helps to be Raccoon Mario inside the dusty chambers of the pyramid. If you're not Raccoon Mario, destroy one of the Buzzy Beetles crawling around and use its shiny shell to blast through the stone walls.



Occasionally, you'll encounter a Hammer Brother on the map screen. This Hammer dude looks tough. However, he's easily defeated if you slide underneath and attack from below. Plus, the special items a Hammer Brother leaves behind are a big help.

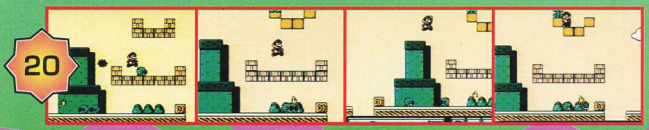


Finding extra men is essential in a huge game like *Super Mario Bros. 3*. When you visit the fortress in World 2, enter the fifth door to the right. In this room, you'll find a one-up mushroom.

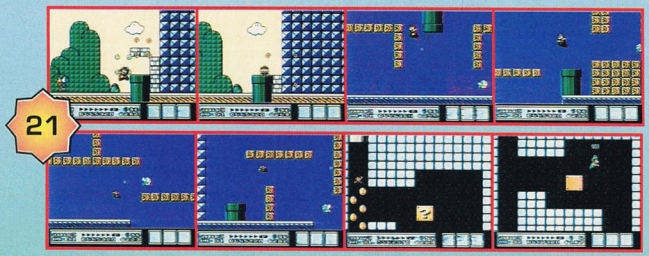


In this game, the slide technique is a helpful move you can try. Use it here to reveal a treasure of silver coins hanging in the sky. Remember: To get an extra Mario, you must collect 100 coins — and this is a *real* good start.

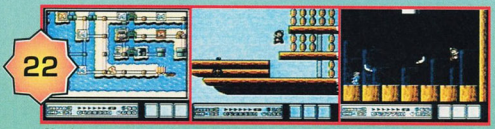
If time allows and Bowser's crazy creatures aren't harassing you, chip away at these blocks in World 3-7. You'll uncover an extra Mario.



Spike is one of Bowser's ruder pets. He throws things, like deadly spiked maces, at you. A couple of stomps gets rid of this pest, though. Then climb the vine you've unearthed to find a surprise floating over Mushroom World.

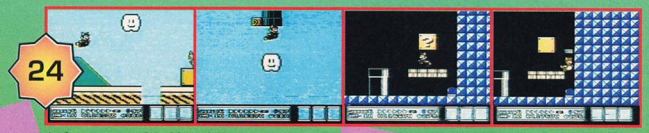


Mario can transform into several animal forms, and then use their accompanying powers. To find the frog suit in World 3-9, slide down this pipe and you'll splash into an underground lake. Swim to the third pipe and enter this secret room for coins and the frog suit.



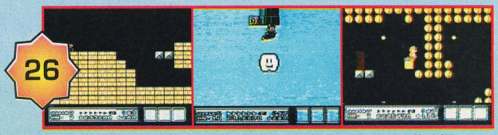
Check your money and score before you leave a level. For a chance at extra coins in some worlds, you must have a double digit match for your money (i.e. 11, 22, 33) that matches the tens' position (second number from the far right) in your score. The right combination sends you to the pirate ship and its glittering treasure. Before you abandon ship, though, you'll face a Hammer Brother.

The fortress of World 4 is a complex maze laced with booby traps. As you crumble the Dry Bone turtles patrolling this basement path, slam into the block to the far right. Next, step on the switch block that appears. A doorway of coins will materialize, and it leads to a vast room rich in power-ups.



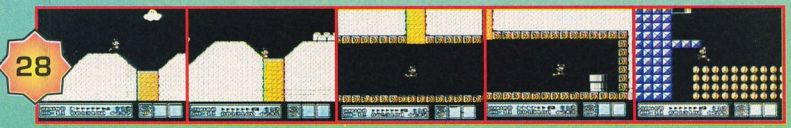
At the entrance to World 4-5, fully charge your P-meter and fly to the pipe at the top right corner of the screen. Through this pipe, you'll find a Tanooki suit. This gives Mario the power of flight and the ability to become an invulnerable statue for a brief time.

Mario's accelerated run is another neat trick to use in this game. Rather than attempting risky leaps across narrow pits, you can simply run across them.

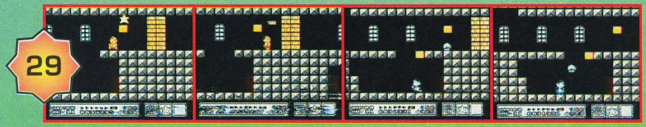


The Mushroom World is littered with Bowser's hulking, stone-walled fortresses. At the entrance to the World 7 fortress, hit these bricks to uncover a switch block that turns these slick stones into a wall of coins. Also, a Tanooki suit lies behind the secret door. Later, you can repeat this process with the same results.

At the start of World 8-1, you must be Raccoon Mario to reach this pipe in the top right corner of the screen. On the other side of the pipe, slip out and kick this Question Block for *three* extra Marios.



At the beginning of World 8-2, the hypnotic hiss of a quicksand waterfall lures you into its gritty snare. But don't panic: You'll fall out of it at the bottom. And there's a pipe to the right that leads to a coin room. You'll be near the end of the stage when you leave this room.



This Starman renders you invincible. Grab it, then dive into the pit. Jump to the right to strike an invisible block that contains a one-up mushroom. Then stop jumping and wait for the mushroom to come to you. Otherwise, you'll seal yourself underneath a row of invisible blocks hanging over the pit.

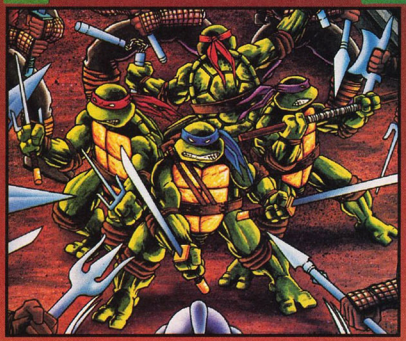
In the Castle of Koopa, leap around the electric Rotodisc and land on this narrow ledge, to the far right of the screen. There's an invisible block here that has a one-up mushroom. That extra man will come in handy as your strange, dreamlike journey into Mushroom World ends at the doors of Bowser's hideout.

GP

SPECIAL STRATEGY FEATURE

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

FALL OF THE FOOT CLAN



Chris Slate Phill Powell

In a dangerous world, it's good to know whom you can count on. April O'Neil, noted TV personality, has four very good friends who have rescued her from various scrapes. Now, once again, she's a friend in need.

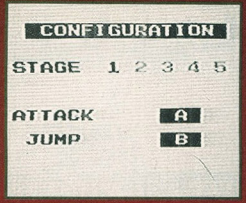
Shredder, the archcriminal, has abducted April. Considering all of Shredder's henchmen, it's going to take a massive effort to free her. A job this big can be handled by no one but her best friends, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

The four overgrown turtles — Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael, and Michaelangelo — set out on the kidnapper's trail. Almost immediately, trouble comes looking for the green ninjas. The enemies they face in *Fall of the Foot Clan* come in every shape and form. You'll encounter a rhinoceros with a Rambo complex, a multi-barbed Spine Stretcher, a heavily armed pig, and whole armies of soldiers and aggressive creeps.

Through five stages of scrolling martial-arts action, the Ninja Turtles take turns battling the deadly opposition. Each hero is armed with his own special weapon: Donatello swings a dominating bo staff, Michaelangelo flips his nunchucks, Leonardo wields the razor-sharp katana blade, and Raphael packs his own kind of blade, the sai.

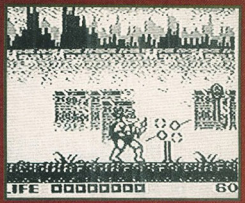
It's shaping up as a mammoth showdown, with April's life hanging in the balance. As frightened New Yorkers scurry to get out of harm's way, Shredder's legions prepare for battle. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are also ready to go. In fact, there's only one warrior missing...*you*.

Ultra, 900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089.



The configuration screen lets you choose your stage and decide which buttons will control your attacks and jumps.

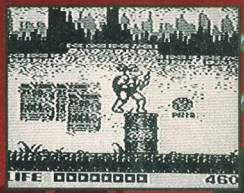
The player-select screen lets you switch between the four turtles. Each turtle has his own strengths and weaknesses.



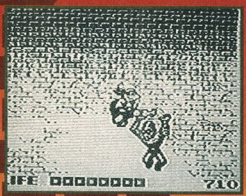
Leonardo has learned how to use the tops of parking meters as lethal weapons.

Whenever you see one of these winged terrors coming at you, stand still and let it approach. When it gets close, unleash your fury.

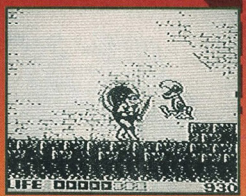
Destroy the barrel this turtle is standing on, then walk into the space the barrel formerly occupied. You'll enter a bonus round!



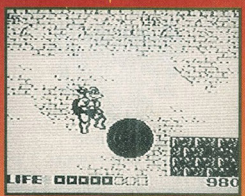
Ahhhh...pizza! It's good, and good for your life meter, too. An entire pizza will completely restore your energy.



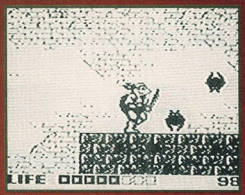
In the second part of stage 1, you meet Foot Clan soldiers in the sewer. Use the jump-kick, your most powerful form of attack. Kick whenever you jump down here.



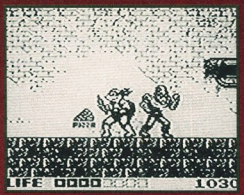
Destroy the Mouser robots really quickly. Otherwise, they'll grab you and drain your energy.



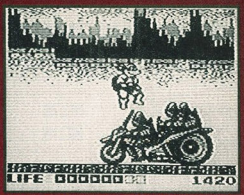
Boulders fall all over this area, and you can't do anything to break them. Your only chance is to perform some skillful jumping.



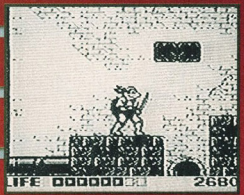
One hit apiece will take care of these pesky bats. Wait until they swoop down at you before attacking.



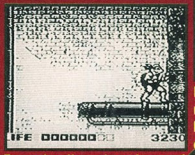
A single slice of pizza won't completely recharge you, but, hey, it's better than nothing!



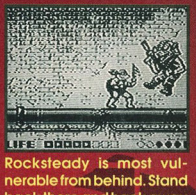
Don't bother trying to kill everyone in the motorcycle gang. When they're about to run you down, just leap straight into the air and let them pass beneath you.



Back in the sewers, it's raining bricks! It's best to wait until a brick falls before jumping over it. But if you're caught in midair as one falls, go ahead and jump-kick it.



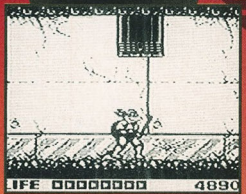
To enter the chambers of Rocksteady, the first boss, get rid of the blocks hiding the entrance.



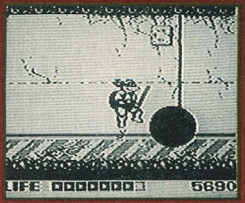
Rocksteady is most vulnerable from behind. Stand back there and hack away at him.

Leonardo's out of the picture for now. Time to warm up another turtle and put him into the game.

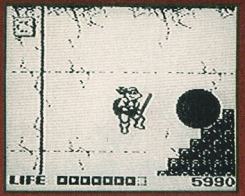
You can bet that Donatello is telling the truth when he says the enemy is near. Take his warning seriously.



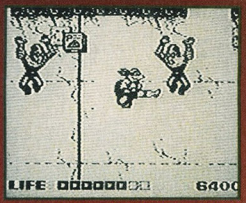
Pistons thrust down from the ceiling in stage 2, threatening to crush you into the floor. You'll need good timing to pass safely beneath them.



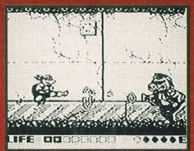
More boulders! What's a turtle to do, except leap over them?



This boulder is a real problem, since it's rolling down the stairs. Don't try to leap over it — instead, jump straight up and let it roll by.

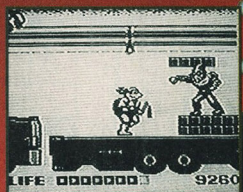


Boxed pizzas are usually guarded by enemies, and the only thing they'll deliver is trouble. Take the pizza from them by jump-kicking the box.

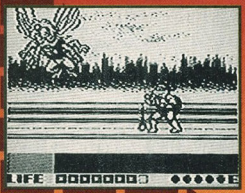


Bebop, the stage boss, has an itchy trigger finger, so get behind him where he'll have trouble shooting you. Also, use Donatello for this fight. He's slower, but more powerful, and he's got a longer reach.

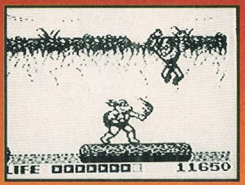
Your enemies have escaped by car. To follow them, hitch a ride on the back of a truck.



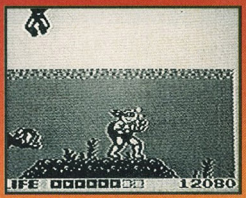
This enemy foot soldier will throw a brick at you. Jump over the flying brick and kick the soldier on the way down.



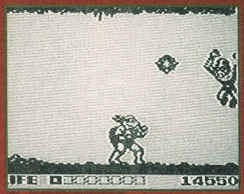
Wait until Baxter Stockman, the stage boss, swoops down at you at the center of the screen, then lear into him. When he pauses in the corners, back off and be ready to block his bullets with your weapon.



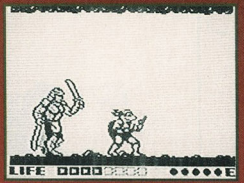
If you keep moving to the right in this area, hopping from log to log, you won't have a lot of ninja enemies to worry about. Some will chase you from the left, but they'll never quite catch you.



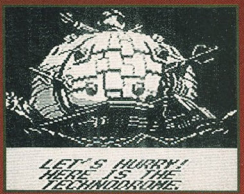
The Filet O'Filth fish have piranhalike teeth — and a taste for turtles. Enemies come at you from all directions down here, and since you're underwater, you'll move more slowly.



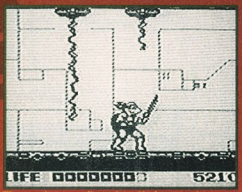
Inside the cave, this Pink Eyesore acts like a homing mine. Treat it like the bats or the bugs — let it come at you, then pop it at the last second.



Shredder hops around the room, so you can't get behind him as you did when battling Rocksteady and Bebop. To fight him, take advantage of Raphael's quickness. Duck in, deliver a blow, and duck back out.

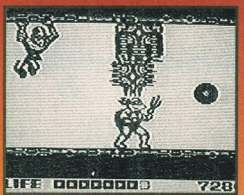


The last stage takes place in the Technodrome — and it's your toughest battle yet.

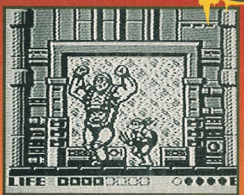


These lasers fire death from above. To get by them, you'll need the same sense of timing you used when dodging the pistons in stage 2.

The Spine Stretchers can't be destroyed. Avoid them at all costs, or they'll shock your shell.



Spine Stretchers come in different sizes, too. To escape this large one (above), keep moving and get in position to shut down the other enemies.



Krang is your final challenge, and he won't give up without a fight. Stand in the left corner and keep swinging your weapon. Good luck!

GP

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Capcom, 3303 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95054.

When Ariel left her ocean home to be with Prince Eric at the end of Walt Disney's hit movie *The Little Mermaid*, all was well in the deep blue sea. But times have changed, and the evil witch Ursula is now taking control of the entire ocean. When Ariel's friends — Flounder, Sebastian, and Scuttle — warn her of the danger, Ariel discards her human form and returns to the sea to stop Ursula.

In the Nintendo version of *The Little Mermaid*, Ariel discovers that everything really *has* changed. The friendly guppies she used to play with have turned mean, and the bigger fish seem determined to make fish food out of her.

During your search for Ursula, you must guide Ariel safely through five underwater stages: the Coral Sea, a sunken ship, an icy ocean, Volcano Bay, and the Palace of Gloom. Your best defense against attackers is Ariel's tail. Swish it twice to snare a fish in a bubble, then swim up and grab the bubble. If you can throw the bubble at another enemy before it bursts, you'll eliminate two fish at once.

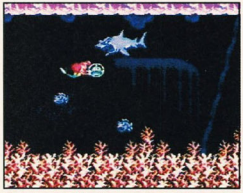
As you swim along, search the sandy bottom, the coral reefs, and rock ledges for magic shells. These shells will let you do more than listen to the roar of the ocean. You can toss them at enemies to stop them in their tracks, or use them to open sunken treasure chests.

When you open a treasure chest, a gleaming ball will float out. Red balls will make your bubbles faster and stronger, able to snare even the biggest fish. Green balls will give you extra strength to leap, dive, and push things out of your way — even boulders.

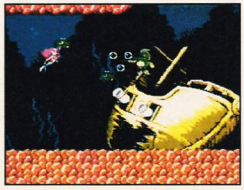
You'll encounter many dangers as you search each stage, but the bosses guarding the exits are the most dangerous foes of all. To defeat them, catch smaller enemies in your bubbles and throw them at the boss's weak spot. This trick even works during your final showdown with Ursula.

Sparkling graphics, colorful characters, low-key violence, and an enchanting story make *The Little Mermaid* a good family game. And while the game play is easy enough for beginners, it's challenging enough to test more experienced players as well.

GP



This shark looks hungry, and Ariel seems like the perfect lunch. To save your skin — er, fin — catch the smaller fish in bubbles and toss them at the shark.



Near the exit from Volcano Bay, keep an eye on the cannons on this sunken ship. The Soldierfish will launch ammunition for *your* attack from his big guns.

The evil witch Ursula is your ultimate enemy. She might look big and tough, but you can beat her the same way you destroyed the other stage bosses.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

LASER INVASION

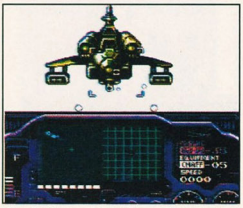
Stephen Poole

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Konami, 900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089.

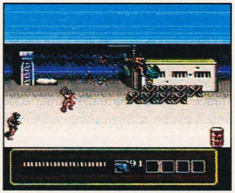
Last year, Konami released a new accessory for the NES called the Laserscope Optical Command Headset. The Laserscope, which is worn like a telephone operator's headset, can be used with any game that requires Nintendo's Zapper light gun. To aim, you just look through an eyepiece with LED cross hairs. To fire, you just shoot off your mouth — literally. Making any noise into the microphone has the same effect as pulling the trigger on the Zapper.

But until recently, the only advantage of using the Laserscope with light-gun games was that your arm wouldn't get tired. Konami's new *Laser Invasion* is the first game designed especially for the Laserscope.

The plot of *Laser Invasion* is routine stuff — you must infiltrate several enemy bases and recover top-secret information to stop a power-mad, oil-rich sheik. (Judging from some differences between the story in the manual and the game's actual screens, it appears that Konami took a nearly finished shooter and tried to link it to current events). Almost every assignment requires you to fly to an enemy base in a helicopter, fight your way on foot to the command center, and then enter the mazelike center to gather intelligence or special weapons.



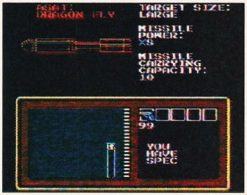
Use chaff to avoid this enemy helicopter's missiles, then use *your* missiles on his weapon systems.



For maximum effect, wait until the screen is full of enemies before shooting the barrel of TNT.

The different modes — aerial combat, ground fighting, and searching through mazes — give *Laser Invasion* a lot of variety. But there's not much depth to each part. Once you complete the first ground mission, for example, you'll have a pretty good idea of what every other ground mission looks like.

The Laserscope is perfect for the flight sequences, because you can aim your missiles anywhere on the screen, instead of only at targets directly in front of you. When you combine the headset with a joystick (you can also use a regular control pad), you start to really *feel* like a pilot.

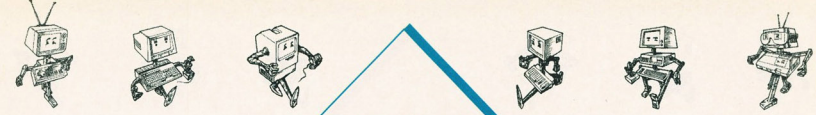


In some compounds, you'll find special equipment that's vital to your mission.

But once you touch down, you might wish you could trade the headset for a trusty Zapper. Because lots of enemies approach from all sides of the screen, you're constantly moving your head to aim. For some reason, the Zapper just feels right when fighting enemy infantry.

Aside from that minor complaint, *Laser Invasion* is a solid, enjoyable game — with or without the Laserscope.

GP



SEGA REVIEWS

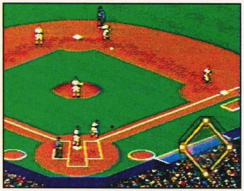
HARDBALL!

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Sega Genesis. Also available as *Hardball II* for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers. Ballistic (Accolade), 550 S. Winchester Blvd., Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95128.

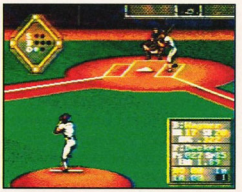
Exactly six years after the release of *Hardball* for the PC — a blockbuster game that sold more than half a million copies — Accolade is pitching a Sega Genesis version. Released under Accolade's new videogame label, Ballistic, *Hardball!* is likely to share the success enjoyed by its famous forefather.

Like the computer version, the videogame serves up an uncluttered, uncannily realistic game of baseball while simultaneously capturing much of the flavor and aura of an afternoon at the ballpark. *Hardball!* does this by rendering the sights and sounds of baseball with an amazing degree of authenticity. Pitchers' windups and batters' swings look as if they came from ESPN game films. Sound effects include the *pop!* of a ball finding its way into a fielder's glove, the *whoosh!* of a would-be hitter's unlucky swing, and the crisp *crack!* of a clean hit.



A split-second delay in reacting to the ball can mean the difference between holding a hitter to a single or allowing him to leg out a double.

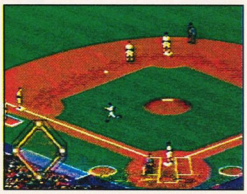
Most remarkable, however, is *Hardball!*'s approach to the pitcher-batter matchup. It lets you duplicate the mind games that are a vital part of the game within the game. Each hurler has a wide range of pitches, which he can throw for either perfect strikes or untouchable balls. Hitters, meanwhile, can position themselves anywhere in the batter's box and can hit to either left or right field.



Hardball!'s crowning glory is its simulation of "the game within the game" — the pitcher-batter matchup.

Fortunately, these capable ballplayers get to ply their trade on an even playing field. Unlike the ballfields in most videogames, this one has reasonable dimensions. This means you won't see an uncommon number of inside-the-park home runs or stupidly missed pop flies. It also means that solid defense is rewarded and dumb mistakes are punished fairly.

One drawback, however, is the generic personality of the players and the ballpark. The players' names and identities are imaginary and anonymous, and you can't choose where you'll play. It would be nice to have actual big-league players, or maybe a team editor that would allow you to stock your own teams with favorite stars. (The latter feature is found in *Hardball II* for the PC.)



The key to making a clutch grab is to follow the shadow of the ball on the field.

Hardball!'s imperfections shouldn't threaten its status as a great game, however. It deserves a place on your game shelf right next to *Tommy Lasorda Baseball*.

GP

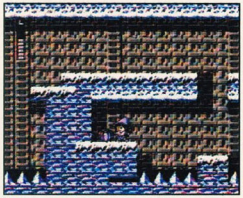
NINTENDO REVIEWS

THE KRION CONQUEST

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Vic Tokai, 22904 Lockness Avenue, Torrance, CA 90501.

Alien robots from the evil Krion Empire have invaded Earth and ransacked the planet to the brink of destruction. Even the most powerful armies in the world cannot repel the invasion. Teetering on the brink of surrender, the people of Earth have one last chance for survival. Only the power of the ancient witches and their mighty magic can stop the invaders.



Large pumpkins restore six blocks on your life meter. Smaller pumpkins restore three, and the little witch dolls (which resemble Francesa) give you an extra life.

In *The Krion Conquest*, the force of magic is on your side as you become the powerful witch Francesa. Your mission is to save the Earth from doom and destruction.

You must fight through five rounds, each with three stages and a final boss. You'll do battle underground, underwater, suspended in air, surrounded by ice, and in outer space, and you'll need all the magic and power at your command to survive.

Every good witch needs a broom, and the purple magic spell will conjure one up for you. Master your broom-handling skills as early as possible — flying is the only way to get across some screens.

There are six kinds of magic in Francesa's bag of tricks. When the game begins, you can use all six. Take a look at your position on the screen and the location of the enemy before choosing which trick to use — each one is different.

Your witch's robes change color to indicate which spell you've cast. If your robes are blue, normal and super shots will freeze your enemies in their tracks for a few moments. Green robes mean you've cast the ball magic spell, so your shots will ricochet off the walls. If your robes are orange, you're using a shield spell, and your shots will form a barrier between you and the enemy robots.

When you choose the fire spell, your robes turn pink and Francesa transforms into a firebird, destroying all enemies on the screen. But make sure you have at least one-third of the power remaining on your life meter before casting this spell — it reduces your life power by that much.

The graphics and screens in *The Krion Conquest* resemble those in the Mega Man series, but don't be fooled by small similarities. When it comes to action, adventure, and graphics, *The Krion Conquest* is unfortunately a step behind those trend-setting games.

GP

Stand on the middle platform to fight this boss. When she hovers above you, fight her with green magic. When she moves down to your level, switch to normal magic and use your super shot.

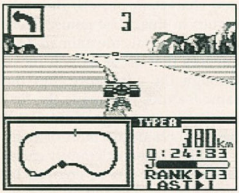
GAME BOY REVIEWS

F-1 RACE

Phill Powell

Version reviewed: Game Boy. Nintendo of America, Inc. P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98073.

When you take 14 impossibly twisted tracks and add 10 quick cars, you know you're in for some first-class racing fun. Equip these mean machines with nitro rockets, and the results can only be described as explosive. This is futuristic Formula One racing, as simulated in Nintendo's *F-1 Race*.



F-1 Race lets you know when your position changes. In this case, we've just taken over third place on the Australian track.

Before the competition begins, you have a choice between two racers. Car A's strong point is maneuverability — it clings to the track like glue. Car B offers you power — and lots of it.

Both autos are souped up with nitro jets that give you extra blasts of acceleration. Unfortunately, the jets are limited, so you've got to save their power for the straightaways. That's when you kick in the nitro and make your play to overtake your competitors. Or, if you're already in first place, to extend your lead on the hungry pack of drivers behind you.

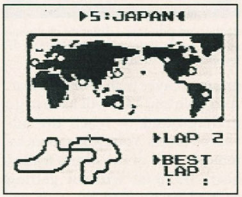
The F-1 circuit covers six of the seven continents (all except Antarctica), and a total of 13 countries. Some of the courses (such as the Australian and Canadian tracks) are fairly simple, with gracefully wide curves and generous straightaways. Others are hopelessly tangled and will test the limits of any driver's sanity.

F-1 Race is a good-looking game, with graphics that show off the country you're in. The U.S.S.R. course, for instance, has a backdrop of buildings that look like they're straight from the Kremlin.

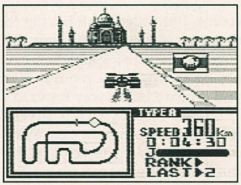
The sound effects simulate the kind of engine din you'd expect to hear at one of these events. The nitro noises are exceptionally vivid.

F-1 Race is the first game that takes advantage of Nintendo's new four-player adapter for the Game Boy. This lets you hook as many as four Game Boys together and race against your friends. The Multi Game mode divides the 14 tracks among three course groups that you drive in a points competition.

Two other modes include the Time Trials and the Grand Prix. In the trials, you run practice laps on all the tracks, either by yourself or against competing racers. And in the Grand Prix, you compete on every course on the circuit, advancing to the next track only after you've won the event you're in.



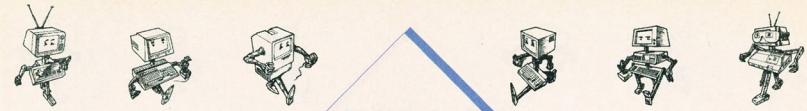
This screen gives you maps of the entire circuit and the layout of each course, as well as a chance to brush up on your geography.



Your ride through India provides you with some great scenery — and one very tough track.

No matter which mode you choose, *F-1 Race* delivers high-octane performance that never fails to please.

GP



NINTENDO REVIEWS

THE ADVENTURES OF LOLO III

Selby Bateman

Version reviewed: Nintendo. HAL America, 7873 S.W. Cirrus Drive, Building 25F, Beaverton, OR 97005.

The first two *Adventures of Lolo* puzzle games for Nintendo have thousands of loyal fans who have struggled to guide little Lolo through countless rooms full of obstacles and dangers. Now *Lolo III* is here to carry on the tradition, and the latest version is not only the biggest, it's also the best.

Those who have not yet played a Lolo game are in for a treat. All you have to do is carefully move Lolo — the little round guy with the big feet — through a series of rooms. But rather than having to shoot or punch or jump about, the emphasis is on using logic to move objects around in the room so that you prepare Lolo's way forward.

In the first two Lolo adventures, our hero had to save Princess Lala from the top of a castle. But in *Lolo III*, you can play as either Lolo or Lala. They're out to rescue their friends, who have been turned to stone.

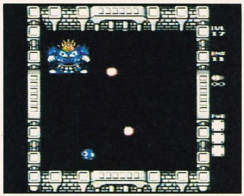
You guide Lolo and Lala across a map full of castles and towers and caves. There's an underwater

Lolo's Grandpa gets you started by teaching you the basic techniques.

Each room presents a different challenge as you guide Lolo and Lala through 17 levels and 100 rooms.

group of caves with levels to clear. And Lolo and Lala will have to go underground to reach the advanced levels. You clear a room by removing all of the hearts (called heart framers) without getting zapped or blocked by your enemies.

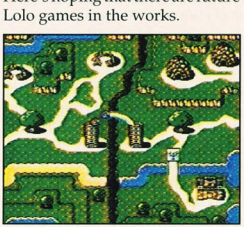
Lolo III is a much larger game than the previous two adventures. There are 100 rooms spread across



At the end of advanced levels, an action screen appears. This adds a brief flurry of flying fingers to the puzzle game.

17 levels. And you'll find a few new characters, objects, and techniques in this latest game. There are also several cute animated sequences that occur as you move through the adventure. But the same features that made the first two Lolo games so good are all still here — there are just more of them.

This is top-notch family entertainment that can be enjoyed by game players of just about any age. Here's hoping that there are future Lolo games in the works.



Lolo and Lala make their way from tower to tower as they solve puzzle rooms on each level.

GP

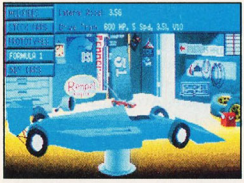
REVIEWS

MARIO ANDRETTI

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory, 640K recommended; CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; supports Ad Lib, Roland, and Tandy sound; joystick or mouse optional. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404.

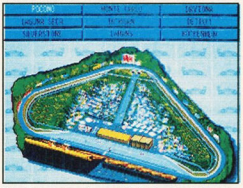
One of racing's most hallowed drivers is now out to make a name for himself in the world of computer gaming. It's probably safe to go ahead and etch that name in stone. Exploring and then dominating new territory is a hallmark of Mario Andretti's splendid 33-year career.



You must win a feature race on each circuit before you can graduate to the next level and more glamorous cars.

Widely acknowledged as the greatest racecar driver in history, Andretti has scored victories on nearly every circuit in the racing world. He's won a national dirt-track championship, stock-car racing's Daytona 500, endurance sports-car racing's Sebring 12-Hour, Indy-car racing's Indianapolis 500, and a Formula One world championship.

The challenge for Electronic Arts when making *Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge* was to translate Andretti's incredible expertise into a sophisticated but playable game. EA responded admirably, producing a game that boasts a wide range of features and a very satisfying driving simulation.



Tracks range from high-banked ovals, such as Daytona, to urban routes through Monte Carlo.

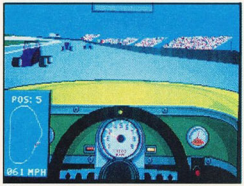
You start out as a rookie dirt-track driver who needs a sponsor—which, not coincidentally, is how Andretti began. Once you've proven you can win in the sprint-car series, you move up to modifieds, then to stock cars, prototypes, Formula Ones, and, finally, Indy cars.

On the pro circuits, you'll have to prove yourself over and over again, just as Andretti did. It's the only way to graduate to racing's higher ranks. The competitions are patterned after real races on actual circuits. To make it to a major race, you have to qualify in a preliminary race.

Many of the tracks are as famous as the men who race them. You can choose from LeMans, Pocono, Indianapolis, Monte Carlo, and Daytona, among others. Each one is designed to represent its real-life counterpart in great detail — size, appearance, reference points, grandstands, and banked turns.

Mario Andretti has something for just about everyone. Action fans will find plenty of high-speed thrills and chills. Simulation buffs can try out different cars on a wide range of tracks. And role-playing enthusiasts get the chance to work their way up from rags to riches, just like the now-legendary Super Mario.

GP



Pay attention to your dashboard instruments, the curves in the track, and your rearview mirror.

SEGA REVIEWS

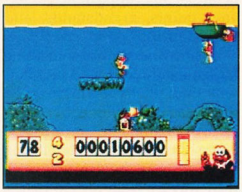
JAMES POND: UNDERWATER AGENT

Lisa M. Bouchey

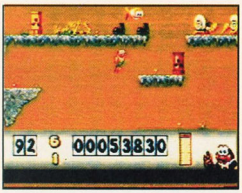
Version reviewed: Sega Genesis. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404.

For years, secret agent 007, super spy James Bond, has been narrowly escaping death, fending off dangerous spies, and single-handedly saving the British Empire. But Britain isn't in danger now. There's trouble brewing in the deep blue sea, and it's up to a different sort of spy to save the day.

The only fish big enough to stop the evil Dr. Maybe from polluting the ocean is Pond — James Pond. In *James Pond: Underwater Agent*, you're a fish with a mission: to save the ocean from environmental destruction.



Your first mission is to free six lobsters trapped in underwater cages. You must unlock at least four of the cages to earn your "license to bubble."



In mission 2, you come to the rescue of seven friendly fish who are trapped in a pond contaminated with illegally dumped radioactive waste.

James Bond fans will feel right at home, if a little out of their element, when receiving assignments. The missions, which are named after James Bond books and movies, include "A View to a Spill," "Fishfingers," and "Orchids are Forever."

Secret rooms, bonus items, and assorted enemies are hidden throughout each mission. The music you hear when you enter a secret room will tell you if the cavern is good, bad, or neutral. If it's a good room, grab everything you can find on your first visit — if you leave and come back later, the room turns bad and you're in for trouble.

Secret rooms aren't the only places you can rack up extra points. The seabed is littered with bonus objects. Some things can be used when you pick them up, but others are needed elsewhere in the game. Watch out for objects that bounce — usually (but not always) they're bad for you. Glue pots and bombs, for example, are very unhealthy. On the other hand, clocks and potion bottles bounce, too, and they work *for* you.

The squid may be the toughest enemy in the game because of the ink he squirts. If you run into a squid, the screen goes black for a few seconds, but just because *you* are blind doesn't mean your enemies are. Avoid this inky darkness at all costs.

According to legend, the sunken ship in mission 4 was loaded with gold when she sank. Move the loot from an underwater cavern to a waiting rowboat, but watch out for pirate ghosts.

James Pond is an action-adventure game with a conscience (not many other games let you save the world from environmental disaster). Its theme and graphics should appeal to players of all ages, but the relatively simple game play makes it better for beginners.

GP

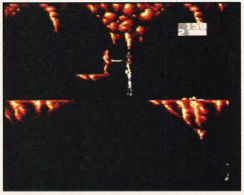
NINTENDO REVIEWS

CONAN

Jeff Lundrigan

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Mindscape/The Software Toolworks, 60 Leveroni Court, Novato, CA 94949.

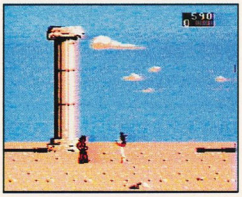
In the dark mists of time in a land known as Nemedia, a warrior with jet-black hair sat before his campfire and listened to a sorcerer tell him the Legend of the Four Urns. The burial urns of the first four kings of Aquilonia had disappeared from the Crypt of Cahalla, and it was said that the one who returned them to their rightful resting place must be the heir to the throne. The warrior listened closely — he, Conan the Barbarian, knew it was his destiny to rule Aquilonia.



Cutting down this skeleton will release a demon — defeat it, and you can use its trident to kill the lion at the end of the stage.

As Conan, you must fight your way to the tombs of Zamboula, where the urns are hidden, and recover them. It's a dangerous journey because the way is guarded by hordes of skeletons, wraiths, dragons, and the like. Except for the boss monsters, though, most of these enemies are more like pests than real threats. You're knocked backwards when hit, so moving forward is sometimes a problem — but most of the enemies don't really do much damage. Unless, of course, you get killed instantly: If you're jumping when hit, you'll get knocked out of the air, which can mean dropping into a bottomless pit.

The game's structure is somewhat interesting — it's a kind of combat puzzle. Somewhere on each level is a special item you'll need to overcome the boss monster, and the main objective is to find and/or figure out how to get that item. For this, you'll have to pay close attention to the legend told by sorcerer Nemonios in the game's instruction booklet. It will tell you some of the items you'll need to find, although it won't be a lot of help in telling you where they are or how to get them.



There's no way to defeat the nymph, but if you show some respect and kneel before her, she'll disappear and let you pass.

The shield will protect you from the medusa's eye-beams. Use it when you have to and slide by.

Actually, *Conan* is a lot more difficult than it needs to be. There's plenty of extra life energy to be found, but it's not much help if you're dropped into a pit, and there are no passwords or continues. The game's controls are strangely laid out: Pressing down doesn't make Conan duck — instead, he jumps in the direction he's facing. While some of the backgrounds are nice, the graphics generally aren't quite up to par. The idea behind the game is somewhat unique, but the idea, unfortunately, isn't carried out very well.

GP

NINTENDO REVIEWS

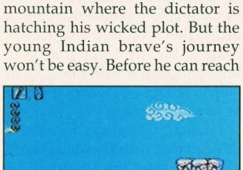
WHOMP 'EM

Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Jaleco, 310 Era Drive, Northbrook, IL 60062.

What do you get when you combine the action in *Super Mario Bros.* with the bosses and weapons in *Mega Man*? Believe it or not, you end up with Soaring Eagle, the Native American hero of *Whomp 'Em*.

When an evil dictator threatens his tribe, Soaring Eagle embarks on a quest to the mysterious mountain where the dictator is hatching his wicked plot. But the young Indian brave's journey won't be easy. Before he can reach

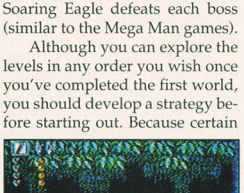


Gourds increase your life force, buffalo headdresses add to your defensive power, and this deerskin shirt makes you invincible for a short time.

the mountain, he must traverse seven mystic worlds, including his native world, the Sacred Woods, the Magic Forest, the Water Test, the Fire Test, the Ice Ritual, and the Secret Cliff. And many strange creatures try to keep Soaring Eagle from advancing.

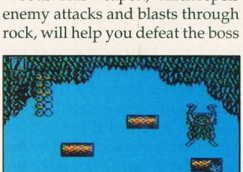
Luckily, Soaring Eagle can defend himself with the weapons and magical items that are strewn across his path or left behind when he kills enemies. Hearts, buffalo headdresses, gourds, magic potions, and other items increase his power and energy. In addition, special weapons or powers called "totems" are awarded when Soaring Eagle defeats each boss (similar to the Mega Man games).

Although you can explore the levels in any order you wish once you've completed the first world, you should develop a strategy before starting out. Because certain



The boss of the Magic Forest is a suspended cocoon that turns into this golden butterfly. Your attack must be relentless — if you retreat, the butterfly's life force will be restored.

totems work best against certain bosses, you may have to experiment to find the most logical course. For instance, you receive the Spear Whirlwind when you defeat the boss of the Sacred Woods. This weapon, which repels enemy attacks and blasts through rock, will help you defeat the boss



This enemy breaks into a circle to attack, then reassembles for the final blow. Try to strike him just before he disintegrates and just after he reassembles.

of the Secret Cliff. So you don't want to venture to the cliffs before going through the woods.

You're often overwhelmed by enemies, but occasionally — your journey through the Magic Forest is a good example — the action slows down a bit. Take advantage of these rare occasions to stockpile supplies. Poke the scenery with your spear to check for hidden bottles, gourds, hearts, and other items. You need all the help you can get when fighting the bosses. Often it can take three full lives to defeat them.

Whomp 'Em, Jaleco's first lighthearted adventure, may borrow heavily from the best games in the business, but the result is a romp that easily stands on its own.

GP

REVIEWS

DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN

Neil Randall

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; minimum memory 640K; CGA, EGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; mouse or joystick optional; supports AdLib and Soundblaster sound boards. Strategic Simulations, Inc., 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Tired of fighting rats, spiders, and giant ants? Do you feel like you're capable of taking on *real* monsters—things like zombies and were-boars and sorcerers and dragons? Do you wish you had spells to spare, hit points by the ton, and weapons that put simple swords and shields to shame?

Most computer role-playing games start you as a beginner, pitting you against lowly creatures and forcing you to work your way up through the evil hierarchy until you finally reach the wizards, dragons, and super-demons. By the time you reach the point where you have powerful spells to cast and challenging beasts to cast them against, you may have lost interest.

Death Knights of Krynn, the latest installment in SSI's Advanced Dungeons & Dragons series, is different. It starts you at the eighth level or higher, and you'll meet nary a cheap victim in this well-crafted game. If you wish, you can transfer your favorite characters from the previous installment, *Champions of Krynn*. As soon as the game gets underway, you'll find yourself arrayed against all kinds of undead creatures, fierce warriors with seemingly endless hit points, and spell-casters skilled in the art of destructive magic.

The security computer can deal with some of the alien creatures. You must also find some way to reach the force-field control behind the glass wall.

This is a true sequel — it picks up exactly where *Champions* left off. You begin in an outpost, and immediately must leave and head north. As you move closer and closer to the central thread of the plot — the rescue of the dead Sir Karl — you find more and more difficult areas to conquer.

As in SSI's other AD&D offerings, there's lots of fighting, though not as much as in earlier games. The combat system is more refined, and it retains the basic concept of individual control over each character. Incidentally, it's a very good idea to maintain control of your characters at all times during combat, because you need to be very selective with your attacks.

In the first battle of the game, Celeste the mage faces a dangerous "nightmare."

If you're new to AD&D games, *Champions of Krynn* is probably the best starting point. But once you've finished, you'll want to move immediately into *Death Knights of Krynn*. Although it doesn't sustain its plot as well as *Champions*, its higher levels make you feel more powerful. Together, they make a very strong role-playing duo.

GP

Another batch of undead creatures is about to attack. It's time to dig in, cast some spells, and pray.

LITTLE NINJA BROTHERS

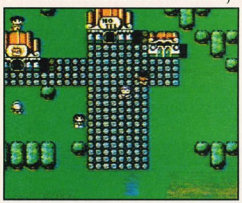
Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Culture Brain, 15315 N.E. 90th Street, Redmond, WA 98052.

If you put the Karate Kid and Bruce Lee together in a Saturday morning martial-arts cartoon show, you'd probably end up with something like *Little Ninja Brothers*. This sprawling action-adventure takes a charming, lighthearted approach to its blend of questing and karate chopping.

What sets this game apart isn't its action or its adventure, but its humor — which is often accidental. The comical story is peppered with odd translations ("I am cheery") and silly dialogue ("I will change you into meatballs and eat you up").

Your adventure takes you on a very involved romp through an expansive, faraway place called Chinaland. The stars are twin ninja brothers, Jack and Ryu. To save the world from a dangerous and deranged dictator, they must recover the seven Bells of Prism. That means the twins must tour all of Chinaland's towns, talk to the villagers, and build up a large inventory of weapons and items.



Start your quest by visiting the town of Hynen. It's the first village you see after descending Mount Epin.

Little Ninja Brothers plays much like the Zelda series, except there's more action. As you roam the countryside, you'll frequently cross paths with the dictator's henchmen. When you do, the game switches to a battle scene in which you have to knock out a certain number of enemies.

Upgrading your weaponry in the various artillery shops is extremely important.

It's not only important to punch out your enemies, but also the blocks and rocks as well. Even though punching a rock with your fist doesn't sound healthy, try it anyway. You'll sometimes uncover a treasure box this way.

Some multiplayer adventure games allow only one player to explore at a time. That means your friend can do little more than cheer you on. Fortunately, *Little Ninja Brothers* allows two players to roam through Chinaland and fight at the same time.

Another feature of the game is an athletic competition. The most diverse event is the obstacle course.

In addition to the quest game, *Little Ninja Brothers* also offers a mini-Olympics competition. You can choose from six athletic events, some of which reappear in the regular game. This feature adds even more fun, and some of the events (especially the track meet) are good practice for the quest adventure.

GP

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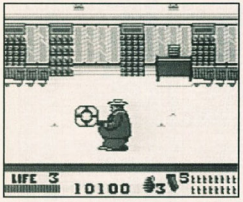
GAME BOY REVIEWS

THE PUNISHER

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Game Boy. Also available for Nintendo, from LJN, 1 Spring Street, Oyster Bay, NY 11771; and for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers, from Paragon, 600 Rugh Street, Suite A, Greensburg, PA 15601.

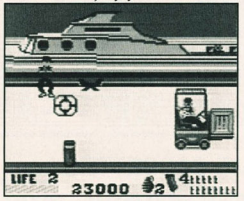
Right from the start, you realize this isn't a game for wimps. As Frank Castle, alias "The Punisher," you embark on a hunt for drug dealers at the local shopping mall. Pretty soon you're embroiled in a furious gunfight with bullets and bodies flying everywhere.



This drug lord is the boss of stage 1. To defeat him, aim a steady stream of bullets at his face. When he sinks to his knees, start tossing grenades.

The Punisher (subtitled "The Ultimate Payback") is based on a Marvel Comics character who seeks perpetual revenge for the gangland murder of his family. But this game is really a carnival-style shooting gallery. Rather than ducks and rabbits on a conveyor belt, your targets are gun-toting drug thugs at a suburban shopping mall, a marina, an airport, a jungle, and a secret enemy hideout. Everything takes place from a first-person point of view — you never see your own character. Instead, you move a gun sight around the screen to aim your shots and throw grenades. And like the targets in a shooting gallery, the action scrolls steadily from right to left.

At first you're armed with a slow-firing pistol. But some bad guys leave behind power-ups when they're shot, so you can collect ammo clips, grenades, machine guns, bulletproof vests, first aid kits, additional lives, and rocket launchers. The bulletproof vests reduce the injury you suffer from enemy gunshots, and the first aid kits restore your energy.



At the end of stage 2, destroy this giant yacht by blasting its hull. Also, shoot the forklift driver and the gunners who jump out of the ship's hatch.

In fact, power-ups are hidden everywhere in this game, so you're encouraged to spray bullets at shop windows, elevators, parked airplanes, wooden crates, storage barrels — you name it. However, *don't* shoot the innocent bystanders, who are weirdly unaware of all the gunplay. At the mall, for instance, you'll see women shoppers looking for bargains; at the marina, fishermen are sitting lazily on the docks. If you gun down a bystander, you're penalized half the energy on your life meter.

Spider-man, another Marvel Comics character, makes a cameo appearance in stage 1 to help you rescue some hostages. If you accidentally shoot a hostage, the web-slinger will scold you.

This helicopter in stage 3 is hard to shoot down because it keeps dropping off soldiers. Try to shoot the men before they leap off the chopper.

The Punisher offers good graphics and lots of fast action. If the high body count doesn't bother you, this is one of the best shooting games you'll find for the Game Boy.

GP

THE HOT 100

The Hot 100 is a list of video and computer games covered in recent issues of *Game Player's*. The ☆ symbol indicates games added in this issue.

KEY TO VERSIONS: **NES** (Nintendo Entertainment System); **Game Boy** (Nintendo Game Boy); **SMS** (Sega Master System); **Genesis** (Sega Genesis); **NEC** (NEC TurboGrafx-16); **PC** (IBM, Tandy, and compatibles); **AT** (IBM AT and compatibles only); **64** (Commodore 64/128); **Amiga** (Commodore Amiga); **CDTV** (Commodore Amiga/CDTV); **Mac** (Apple Macintosh); **Apple II** (Apple II/IIa/IIc/IIe); **IIGS** (Apple IIGS); **7800** (Atari 7800); **2600** (Atari VCS 2600); **XE** (Atari XE game system and 8-bit computers); **Lynx** (Atari Lynx); **ST** (Atari ST). *The first version listed in each entry was the version reviewed.*

Adventures in the Magic Kingdom is like six games in one. There's a trivia quiz plus five different action sequences that take place on amusement-park rides at Disney's Magic Kingdom. The object is to collect silver keys so Mickey Mouse can unlock the Enchanted Castle. A good game for younger players, although the graphics don't stack up to other Disney games for Nintendo. Capcom, for NES.

Arch Rivals is a basketball game that might better be called *Michael Jordan's Punch-Out*. Are you up against a tough opponent? No problem — just deck him with a rabbit punch and steal the ball. There's no such thing as fouls in *Arch Rivals*. Yet despite the free-for-all rules, you can still dribble, pass, fake, shoot, steal, snatch rebounds, block your opponent's shots, and perform slam-dunks. Fast-moving and entertaining. Acclaim, for NES.

Balance of the Planet is game designer Chris Crawford's expansive follow-up to *Balance of Power*. This time you play a United Nations high commissioner who controls all decisions affecting Earth's environment. It's an awesome job, because you soon learn the complex relationships between scientific research, industrial and agricultural production, pollution, conservation, family planning, overpopulation, and much more. Not just a game, it's really a first-class educational tool that's also interesting to play. Chris Crawford Games (distributed by Accolade), for PC, Mac.

☆ **Balloon Kid** is a charming, nonviolent game in which you play a girl named Alice in search of her lost brother. Following a trail of balloons, and taking to the air with a balloon of your own, you must zip through clouds, dodge under platforms, and avoid many strange creatures. It's a good game, but only if you've got the patience — the upper levels are extremely difficult, and there's no password feature. Nintendo of America, for Game Boy; NES version called *Balloon Fight*.

Bandit Kings of Ancient China makes you a chieftain in 12th-century China. You must eliminate an evil warlord before barbarians invade from the north. This is the latest in a series of historical simulations from Koei, and like its predecessors, it's a deep, sophisticated, utterly absorbing game of strategy on the grandest scale. Koei, for NES, Amiga, PC.

Bane of the Cosmic Forge is actually *Wizardry VI* with a new, improved look and feel. It continues the fantasy role-playing adventure that started nearly a decade ago with the original *Wizardry*, but with jazzier graphics and an easier-to-use player interface. The combat gets a bit heavy as you move deeper into the game, and the puzzles can sometimes be frustrating, but overall it's a good effort. Sir-Tech, for PC.

Base Wars is futuristic baseball with artificial athletes. Team rosters include robots, flybots, cyborgs, tanks, and intelligent motorcycles. The computerized pitchers can throw incredible curves and supersonic fastballs. But these players don't stop swinging when they drop the bat — they duel for extra bases and fight over close calls, sometimes destroying each other in the process. A pleasure to watch and fun to play. Ultra, for NES.

Bonk's Adventure is NEC's answer to Nintendo's popular *Super Mario Bros.* series. The star is a cute caveman named Bonk who subdues enemies by bashing them with his rock-hard head. Bonk is on a quest to save Princess Za from the evil King Drool, and he encounters numerous prehistoric obstacles. A charming, cartoonlike game for all ages. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Castelian** isn't for anyone with a short fuse. Your goal is to scale a series of towers swarming with various guard machines and then demolish the structures by planting bombs. The nonstop action can be frustrating and unnerving, even for experienced game players. But the graphics are cute, and the rotating towers give the game a unique look. Asmik, for NES.

Castle of Illusion: Starring Mickey Mouse features the world's favorite rodent on a quest to rescue Minnie Mouse from the clutches of a wicked witch. Five doors in a castle lead to five different worlds, and Mickey must make his way through all of them. Violence is downplayed, and the spectacular graphics would almost be at home on a movie screen. Recommended for all ages. Sega, for Genesis.

Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse goes back in time to the beginning of the Belmont family and the start of their troubles with Dracula. As Trevor, an ancestor of Simon (the star of *Castlevania* and *Castlevania II*), you must stop Dracula from conquering all of mankind. Good graphics and action make this "prequel" a worthy addition to the *Castlevania* series. Konami, for NES.

The Chessmaster is an extremely versatile chess opponent who's always ready to play. An unusually wide variety of options let you fine-tune the game to your own skills. You can tell the computer how much time it gets to think about its next move, take back and replay any number of moves, set up the board any way you want, and much, much more. HI Tech Expressions, for Game Boy; The Software Toolworks, for PC, Amiga, ST.

☆ **Continuum** is an unusual action-puzzle game whose spinning, whirling graphics are almost enough to make you dizzy. You control a craft called a Mobile, and your goal is to bounce off colored platforms to make your way through more than 250 different rooms. The sweeping "camera angles" and realistic 3-D effects combine to make *Continuum* a unique mental challenge. Data East, for PC.

Double Dragon III: The Sacred Stones once again stars Billy and Jimmy Lee, two brothers who are expert martial-arts fighters. This time, their beautiful friend Marion has been kidnapped by a brutal gang of ninja thugs. To rescue her, you must fight your way from the alleyways of America to the Egyptian desert. Lots of action, good graphics, and a two-player mode make this sequel another winner. Acclaim, for NES.

Dr. Mario relegates the Italian plumber of *Super Mario Bros.* fame to a bit part — a doctor who tosses colored vitamin capsules into a jar of unruly viruses. Only by aligning the capsules to match colors can you eliminate the viruses and save Dr. Mario's runaway medical experiment. Like *Tetris*, its inspiration, *Dr. Mario* is fun, fast-paced, and very, very addictive. Nintendo, for NES, Game Boy.

Dragon Warrior II is a gripping role-playing adventure — the sec-

ond installment in the most popular series of Nintendo games in Japan. As the descendant of Erdrick the Great, you have to free a stricken land from the evil sorcerer Hargon. One of the largest and most complex RPGs available for Nintendo. Enix, for NES.

Dragon's Lair, an arcade classic, now comes to the NES as an action game with kick. As Dirk the Daring, you descend into the domain of Singe the dragon to rescue the beautiful Daphne. State-of-the-art graphics and animation make a challenging game that's recommended for experienced players. CSG Imagesoft, for NES, Game Boy.

DuckTales delightfully captures the spirit of Walt Disney cartoons. You guide Scrooge McDuck (with cameo appearances by other Disney characters) throughout the world on a quest for five legendary lost treasures. The amusing graphics are vintage Disney, there's no gruesome violence, and the skill level is challenging without being too difficult. Capcom, for NES, Game Boy.

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark stars that pneumatic nymph of naughtiness, horror-movie host Elvira. After inheriting a huge castle from an uncle she hardly knew, Elvira finds herself in a life-or-death battle against an evil ancestor from beyond the grave. It's an intriguing blend of fantasy role-playing and animated graphics adventure, with a touch of risque humor. The graphics are gorgeous, but very gory. Accolade, for PC.

☆ **Eye of the Beholder** is the first in a new series of graphics-based Advanced Dungeons & Dragons games from SSI. It takes you into the dark recesses of ancient Waterdeep, a city from the Forgotten Realms series of role-playing games. Thanks to its vast scope, stunning graphics, and great soundtrack, this game should satisfy hard-core AD&D fans and provide the perfect introduction for new players as well. SSI, for PC.

Final Zone II is a scrolling military shooter on CD for the TurboGrafx-16. As a Rambo-type hero, you must battle against ZOD, an evil army that wants to conquer the world. Your commando is armed with a variety of weapons, and you enemies are both numerous and aggressive. Although *Final Zone II* is a decent shooter, it doesn't really show off the CD format. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Flying Warriors** pits an elite team of kung fu masters against Demonyx, Earth's most ancient enemy. After escaping his magical prison and exile in space, Demonyx returns for revenge. *Flying Warriors* is a big game, and it offers a nice blend of role-playing and martial arts. But restrictions on flying and on using *all* of your characters might keep it from getting off the ground. Culture Brain, for NES.

G.I. Joe makes you a member of an elite team of super-commandos, ready to defend the world against the evil terrorist forces of Cobra. In this six-level action game, you get to pick your own three-man assault squad and destroy Cobra's hidden bases. Colorful graphics, fast-paced action, and an interesting element of strategy combine to make it a winner. Taxan, for NES.

Gremlins 2: The New Batch follows the action of the movie pretty closely. As Gizmo, you must save Clamp Center from certain doom at the hands of a horde of evil Gremlins. This game has some of the best graphics around in a scrolling action game for the Game Boy, and even experienced gamers will find the last two stages challenging. Sunsoft, for Game Boy, NES.

HAL Wrestling gives you the chance to use many of the same moves as pro wrestlers — without having to put on a silly costume. You can choose from a number of different wrestlers, each with his own set of moves. The wrestlers are all distinguishable and their moves show a flair for the dramatic. Players of all skill levels should find this game a challenge. HAL America, for Game Boy.

☆ **Harlem Globetrotters** lets you control either the "Trotters or the Generals, their regular opponents. Using an adapter, up to four people can play, with one or two players per team. Almost all the rules of real basketball apply, but your control is limited. You can run, pass, shoot, block, and steal, but stunt moves are randomly chosen for you. A little more attention to this part of the game would have gone a long way. GameTek, for NES.

The Hunt for Red October puts you in command of a Soviet nuclear submarine trying to escape to America. As you zigzag your way across the Atlantic Ocean, the entire Soviet Navy tries to stop you. To fight back, your sub has guided missiles, torpedoes, and other high-tech defenses. Fun for one or two players, this game is an exceptionally well-designed shooter. Hi Tech Expressions, for Game Boy, NES.

Ikari Warriors III continues the story of Paul and Vince, this time on a mission to rescue the president's kidnapped daughter from an evil organization known as Crime Ghost. But Paul and Vince have lost their weapons, turning this installment into a punch-and-kick game instead of a shooter. A limited range of moves puts a dent in the action, but it's still a worthwhile game. SNK, for NES.

☆ **Imperium** is a strategy game in which you strive to make Earth the most important world in the galaxy. You have to manage the economy (both domestic and interplanetary); compete both militarily and diplomatically against rival empires; expand through colonization and conquest; and keep yourself alive by finding supplies of the galaxy's life-extending drug. A highly detailed but complex game. Electronic Arts, for PC.

Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf unites 18 of the Golden Bear's favorite holes into one ultimate course. From St. Andrews to Augusta National to Pebble Beach, it does a great job of simulating pro golf. Wind conditions, hazards, and the club you choose all play a part. Although the lack of an overhead view makes putting more difficult, this is a first-class golf game. Konami, for NES; Accolade, for PC, 64, Amiga, IIGS.

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf is available for the TurboGrafx-16 as both a cartridge and a CD. The two versions are nearly identical, except the CD has five courses instead of one, plus Jack's digitized voice and two more musical soundtracks. Either way, you can't go wrong. Unlike NEC's *Power Golf*, this is a true simulation that adheres closely to the computer version — it's more realistic *and* more difficult. Accolade, for NEC.

John Madden Football is probably the best football simulation around. You can choose from 17 different NFL teams, each with real-life strengths and weaknesses. Unequalled graphics, bone-crunching sound effects, and a perfect blend of strategy and action make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

Jones in the Fast Lane is a tongue-in-cheek look at what it takes to succeed as a yuppie. Choosing from four male and female characters, you start by setting your goals in life, balancing wealth, happiness, education, and your career. Then you rent an apartment, go to school, borrow money, and generally go about building your future. Essentially a board game, it's fun, witty, and clever, but also limited. Sierra, for PC.

Jordan vs. Bird lets you step into the basketball shoes of either Michael "Air" Jordan or Larry "Sharpshooter" Bird for a climactic one-on-one match, a slam-dunk contest, or a three-point shootout. Your opponent is controlled by either the computer or a friend. The three-point shootout is a bit tiring, but the one-on-one match is the highlight of the game. Milton Bradley, for NES; Electronic Arts, for PC, 64.

☆ **Kabuki — Quantum Fighter** takes place inside Earth's defense computer, which has been invaded by an alien virus. To fight the invader, scientists convert a soldier into raw data so he can enter the computer. But as an odd side effect, he's also transformed into a Japanese kabuki actor who can destroy enemies with his waist-length red hair. Despite the bizarre story, this game has dynamite action and graphics. HAL America, for NES.

King's Quest V: Absence Makes the Heart Go Yonder is the latest chapter in Roberta Williams's long-running saga. This time, King Graham has returned from a pleasant walk in the woods to find that his castle has completely disappeared. It's your job to solve the mystery. This is the first Sierra game to feature VGA graphics, and although the screens load very slowly, they're simply amazing. Sierra, for PC.

☆ **KlashBall** is a futuristic sports game based on soccer, basketball, and hockey. In an arena filled with space-age twists, two squads of armored gladiators try to knock a ball into their opponent's goal — a four-foot hole in the back wall. You can play against the computer or another person. Crisp graphics and clear ball movement make *KlashBall* an entertaining addition to any game collection. SOFEL, for NES.

Lakers versus Celtics is a basketball game for fans of real basketball. Many of the game's statistics reflect those of the real

world, and the more you know about the actual teams, the better you'll be at choosing the right offense and defense. This is one game that successfully captures many of the thrills of real NBA basketball. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

☆ **The Last Ninja** gets off to an unusual start when two powerful ninjas (one good, one evil) are magically transported centuries into the future to present-day Manhattan. Although the emphasis is on action, you also have to find and use hidden objects, weapons, and passages on your way to a final showdown with the evil ninja. The puzzle solving adds a twist to what otherwise would be a routine action game. Jaleco, for NES.

Lemmings is an instantly addictive and incredibly cute action-puzzle game. Large numbers of harmless but stupid creatures will blindly march to their doom unless you guide them to safety. By turning a few lemmings into roadblocks, tunnelers, carpenters, and even parachutists, you can try to save the others. Each level gets more difficult until it finally seems impossible — but there's always a solution. Psygnosis, for Amiga, PC, ST, Mac; coming soon for the NES and 16-bit Nintendo from Sunsoft.

Links clearly attempts to be the golf simulation to end all golf simulations. The graphics are absolutely stunning — although they *do* take quite awhile to load. The simulation itself rewards real golfers without being too difficult for non-golfers to play. Access, for AT.

Little Nemo: The Dream Master is a gentle game starring a turn-of-the-century comic-strip character. As Little Nemo, a sleeping kid in a nightshirt, you journey through an odd fantasy world, dealing with enemies by tossing candy at them or turning yourself into various animals. Recommended for intermediate players; experienced gamers will probably consider most of the game a warm-up. Capcom, for NES.

☆ **The Lone Ranger** combines simple role-playing with two kinds of action. As the Lone Ranger, you ride from town to town, questioning locals about outlaws. This leads to numerous shootouts, with scrolling action and first-person shooting gallery screens. Some of the action is frustrating, and the game has some odd touches (ninjas and computers), but the excellent graphics and varied game play keep things fun. Konami, for NES.

☆ **Loopz** presents you with straight and curved pieces of track in varying shapes and lengths, and your job is to place them on the screen to form continuous loops. The longer loop you build, the more points you win, but the longer you go without finishing a loop, the more crowded the board gets. The graphics and sound are average at best, but *Loopz* makes up for it with several variations and great playability. Mindscape, for Amiga, NES, Game Boy.

M.U.L.E. revives a 1984 computer game in which one to four players colonize an undeveloped planet. The object is to see who can finish with the most money and property. Each player must decide how much food to grow, how much energy to generate, and how much valuable ore to mine. Surpluses and shortages are handled via auctions. Entertaining and clever, but disappointingly, the graphics haven't changed since 1984. Mindscape/The Software Toolworks, for NES.

M.U.S.H.A. is an arcade shooter that may not achieve anything new, but it does everything right. The backgrounds have style and depth, and the action is engagingly busy. It's difficult to imagine the next step up — with action this addictive and graphics this flawless, you may well wonder what more can be done on the home videogame screen. Seismic, for Genesis.

Magical Dinosaur Tour isn't really a game — it's a dinosaur encyclopedia on a compact disc. As the first educational program for the TurboGrafx-16, it sets a high standard. You can call up information, pictures, and even animated cartoons of your favorite dinosaurs. Attractive graphics and an easy-to-use interface make it entertaining as well as educational. NEC, for NEC.

Mega Man 3 follows the same winning formula as the first two installments. The android Mega Man travels from world to world, defeating enemy robots and capturing their weapons for his own use. This time, though, the evil Dr. Wily has turned good (or has he?). Its great story, outstanding graphics, and exciting game play make it the best Mega Man game ever. Capcom, for NES.

Mercenary Force is an arcade shooter set in 19th-century Japan. You must pick your four-man team from different types of mercenaries and select their formations as you battle across 72 different screens with more than 50 kinds of enemies. This game is one of the most complex and elaborate shooters available for the Game Boy. Meldac, for Game Boy.

MetalStorm is a side-scrolling shooter with a twist. By pushing a button, you can reverse the pull of gravity and allow your warrior to "fall" upward and walk on the ceiling. This comes in handy when moving through the game's well-designed layouts of platforms and barriers. Dynamic boss enemies, outstanding graphics, and attention to detail put this game head-and-shoulders above the average shooter. Irem America, for NES.

Mickey's Dangerous Chase stars Mickey Mouse in a gentle action-adventure with G-rated violence. Mickey's goal is to track down Big Bad Pete, who stole a gift that Mickey gave to Minnie Mouse. Although most of the game is suitable for younger players, the final stages will challenge experienced gamers, too. A bouncy soundtrack and nice graphics add to the fun. Capcom, for Game Boy.

Muppet Adventure No. 1: Chaos at the Carnival is the first in a projected series of Muppet games. Miss Piggy has been pignapped, and it's up to Kermit and a band of Muppet adventurers to rescue her. While the level of challenge is suitable for players of all skill levels, the game is marred by surprisingly flat and unimaginative graphics. Hi Tech Expressions, for NES.

NBA All-Star Challenge lets you choose from four different variations: a one-on-one match between two NBA players; an accuracy shootout; a friendly game of H-O-R-S-E; or a free-throw contest. *NBA All-Star* does a fine job of squeezing these tall guys onto the Game Boy's tiny LCD screen, although the court is a bit small. Authentic and fun. LJN, for Game Boy.

Nightmare on Elm Street is a wild adaptation of the hit horror films starring the frightening Freddy Kreuger. Now *you* are the only one who can stop Freddy, and your only hope is to gather and incinerate his bones. But your mission is blocked by hordes of ghouls, ghosts, and monsters. With its attractive special effects, this game is almost as much fun to look at as it is to play. LJN Toys, for NES.

Ninja Spirit is a large martial arts adventure that is NEC's answer to *Ninja Gaiden* (NES) and *Revenge of Shinobi* (Genesis). Your goal is to find and destroy the half-man, half-wolf creature that murdered your father many years ago. The action moves horizontally as you fight enemy ninjas and creatures while picking up weapons and power-ups. All of the screens are extremely detailed, with dark, brooding backgrounds. One of the best martial-arts games available for any system. NEC, for NEC.

Nobunaga's Ambition II is a tightly woven strategy game based on the power struggles of 16th-century Japan. As an ambitious warlord, you pursue various military, political, and economic strategies to strengthen your fiefdom and absorb others. In terms of graphics, playability, and sophistication, it's a big improvement over the first game. Historically accurate and intellectually stimulating. Koei, for NES, PC.

Operation C stars Scorpion, the trigger-happy hero of *Contra* and *Super C* on the NES. In this game, Scorpion must fight his way through five stages on a lush tropical island to defeat the Black Viper, an evil alien who wants to conquer Earth with an army of mutant creatures. Thanks to excellent graphics, sound, and action, *Operation C* is a true marvel. Ultra, for Game Boy.

Orb-3D is an odd game that combines action, puzzle-solving, and 3-D glasses. To navigate your spaceship through 30 different puzzle screens, you have to bounce off all the visible targets without running out of fuel. The 3-D effects are not very dramatic and the glasses may cause eyestrain, but luckily you can play without them. The puzzles offer variety, but the maneuvers are repetitive. Hi Tech Expressions, for NES.

☆ **Overlord** is a fast-moving strategy game in which you must defend your position as supreme ruler of the universe by defeating four newly discovered enemies. You accomplish this goal by colonizing planets, building up your economy, equipping your military, and launching attacks. There's lots to do in this game, and keeping tabs on your empire is almost as demanding as conquering your adversaries.

Mastertronic, for PC, Amiga.

☆ **PGA Tour Golf** has some features not found in many other golf games, such as fly-by hole previews, TV-style announcers, and instant replays. You can play an entire PGA season against champion golfers, and the game saves your progress automatically. It isn't perfect, but it's faithful to the look and feel of real golf — complete with all of the frustrations and triumphs. Electronic Arts, for Genesis, PC, Amiga, Mac.

Phantasy Star II is a role-playing adventure that delivers all the fun and challenge of the original *Phantasy Star* for the Sega Master System, plus the added depth and complexity that 16-bit technology can offer. Gorgeous graphics, a compelling story, and a very welcome save-game feature nominate *Phantasy Star II* as one of the best titles available for the Genesis. Sega, for Genesis.

☆ **Pick'N Pile** is a fast-paced puzzle game in which colored balls and other objects fall out of the sky. You have to make the balls disappear by stacking them up by color at the bottom of the screen. You're working against a time limit, and often you have to deal with rapidly spreading flames and other hazards. Although *Pick'N Pile* doesn't particularly show off the Amiga's capabilities, it's both frantic and addictive. Ubi Soft, for Amiga.

Pipe Dream is an appealing strategy game that offers an interesting combination of logical challenges and fast, nonviolent action. The object is to build the longest possible network of pipes before a liquid called *flooz* reaches the end of the pipeline. Big scores require long, complex networks. Lucasfilm, for PC, 64, Mac, Amiga, ST, NES, Game Boy.

PowerBall is a souped-up version of soccer with elements of hockey and football. Almost anything is legal: You can steal the ball with a diving tackle, leap into the air and land on the ball carrier, or slam into him with a tornado-like spin. Whether you're playing the computer or a friend, the sleek graphics and riveting action should keep your adrenaline pumping. Namco-America, for Genesis.

Powermonger borrows many of the concepts in *Populous* but takes them a step further. To rule the world, you must conquer 195 different lands one by one, contending with rival warlords, bad weather, and starvation along the way. Excellent graphics and sound effects combine with challenging strategy to make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, for Amiga, PC.

Prince of Persia is an action-adventure straight out of the 1001 Tales of the Arabian Nights. You play a sword-swinging swashbuckler who's trying to save a beautiful princess from the clutches of an evil vizier. What sets this game apart, though, is the remarkable cartoonlike animation, which is based on motion studies of real people. It's fun to watch and to play. Broderbund, for Amiga, PC, Apple II.

The Punisher is based on a Marvel Comics character whose family was gunned down by mobsters. Now on a lone rampage against crime, The Punisher must fight his way through New York City and ultimately defeat Kingpin, the gangster boss. This full-tilt shooter offers nothing new, but is a good-quality game with no major flaws. LJN, for NES; Paragon, for PC.

Qix is an excellent revival of a classic arcade hit from 1981. A very simple game with very simple graphics, it translates well to the Game Boy's small screen. Your goal is merely to fill in sections of the screen by drawing lines with the cursor — while avoiding some persistent enemies. It's fun, but some of today's gamers may find this golden oldie a little too simple. Nintendo, for Game Boy; Taito, for NES, PC, Amiga, 64, ST, II, IIGS.

Railroad Tycoon is a truly exceptional game that combines rich historical accuracy with the fun of Monopoly. Starting in the early 19th century, you begin building your railroad empire from scratch. The simulation encompasses everything from rate wars and corporate takeovers to train-dispatching and urban development, yet is amazingly easy to play. A real standout. MicroProse, for PC.

Red Baron is one of the best World War I flight simulators we've seen. Rather than bogging you down in historical and aeronautical detail, it lets you control almost every variable so you can add as much realism as you want. You can fly single missions or a whole campaign in a variety of aircraft on either side. You can even duel such famous aces as Georges Guynemer or Baron von Richthofen. Dynamix/Sierra, for PC.

Rescue of Princess Blobette is the sequel to the popular *A Boy and His Blob* for the NES. Princess Blobette has been taken prisoner by the Antagonistic Alchemist, and it's up to a young Earth

boy and his friend Blob to save her. While not a huge challenge for experienced players, the game retains most of the charm and nearly all the playability of its NES predecessor. Absolute Entertainment, for Game Boy.

Robocop 2 continues the crusade of Frank Murphy, a severely wounded Detroit policeman who has been rebuilt as a cyborg. This time, Robocop is after Cain, a criminal mastermind who is ravaging Detroit with a new drug called Nuke. In each stage, you have to stomp on Nuke canisters while fighting numerous bad guys. Good action and graphics make this game a successful sequel. Data East, for NES.

S.C.A.T. pits the Special Cybernetic Attack Team against Vile Malmort, an alien conqueror whose mutant armies are invading Earth. Five stages begin in the ruins of New York and end up in the heart of Malmort's spaceship. Two people can play simultaneously, choosing from male and female characters. With its remarkable graphics and action, this challenging shooter looks and plays more like a 16-bit game than an 8-bit game. Natsume, for NES.

☆ **Shadow Blasters** is a martial-arts game in which four heroic humans challenge the soldiers of Ashura, the King of the Evil World. One or two people can play at once, and you can freely switch your character among all four heroes. Thanks to dynamic bosses and handsome graphics, this isn't just another slash 'em, trash 'em ninja game — it's very rewarding to play. Sage's Creation, for Genesis.

Shadow Dancer: The Secret of Shinobi is the third installment in the popular Shinobi series (the second for the Genesis). This time, ninja hero Joe Musashi dons his Shinobi uniform to battle the Union Lizard, a criminal gang which is terrorizing New York. Shinobi, accompanied by Yamato, a faithful dog, punches and kicks his way through several stages of enemies while rescuing kidnapped children. An excellent continuation of the Shinobi series. Sega, for Genesis.

☆ **Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective** is a landmark CD game that offers full-motion video and sound with real actors and actresses. You have three different cases to solve, and you can draw on such diverse sources of information as the *London Times*, the Baker Street Irregulars, and interviews with witnesses and suspects. It's more like taking part in a movie than playing a videogame. *Sherlock Holmes* is a must-see for all electronic gamers. NEC, for NEC (CD); coming soon for CDTV.

Silent Service II is an outstanding sequel to the popular WWII submarine simulator. Multiple skill and realism levels are complemented by enjoyable ease of play. The graphics define a new state of the art. Overall, *Silent Service II* is not only a worthy sequel, but a classic in its own right. Microprose, for PC.

SimEarth puts you in charge of a planet from its birth to its death. You control everything from its water distribution and plate tectonics to the beginning of life and evolution. You can start with a new planet or tackle an existing world gone awry. Ecological issues such as global warming, the ozone layer, and pollution suddenly become more than abstractions in this complex and intriguing simulation. Maxis, for PC.

The Simpsons stars America's rowdiest brat in his very own Nintendo game. Space aliens are invading Springfield, but only Bart Simpson — with his X-ray glasses — can see them. Unable to convince skeptical adults, Bart begins a one-boy battle against the creepy mutants. Cartoonlike graphics and lots of action make Bart's first videogame a success. Acclaim, for NES.

Sinistron is a futuristic shooter in which you pilot a tiny spacefighter against a huge, living spaceship that has an appetite for planets. You've got to fight your way to its evil brain before it can gobble up the whole solar system. There's nothing new here, but *Sinistron* is a demanding shooter with colorful graphics and plenty of action. IGS, for NEC.

Skate or Die 2 begins after you accidentally run over the mayor's wife's poodle with your skateboard. In retaliation, the city demolishes your skateboard ramp, and now you have to earn enough money to build another. Your quest takes you to shopping malls, city streets, and beaches. A much-improved and worthy

successor to a million-copy bestseller. Electronic Arts, for NES.

☆ **Skate or Die: Tour de Thrash** lets you choose between two kinds of skateboarding — ramp stunts or speed-racing through giant sewer pipes. The Retro-Rocket Ramp allows free-form stunts with points awarded for flashy execution of tricky moves. The Stale Fish Tour consists of timed races through sewer pipes in eight different cities. All of the action is realistic and a heckuva lot of fun. Electronic Arts, for Game Boy.

Slime World raises slime to an art form. On a putrid planet awash in scum and sludge, you can choose from six different missions. Most require you to escape from mazelike caverns dripping with goo and haunted by slimy creatures. Some missions demand arcade skills; others emphasize exploration. Up to eight Lynxes can be hooked together for multiplayer games. Delightfully disgusting. Atari, for Lynx.

Snake's Revenge is the worthy sequel to *Metal Gear*. Once again you play the role of Snake, an elite commando. Your mission: Stop Colonel CaTaffy, who together with the Higharolla Kockamamie is threatening the world with the Ultra-Sheik Nuclear Attack Tank. Really a cross between a role-player and a shooter, this is a big game with countless items and clues to discover and zillions of enemies to fight. Ultra, for NES.

☆ **Star Control** is a science-fiction war game that pits the Alliance of Free Stars against the Ur-Quan Hierarchy. They do battle with 14 different types of space vessels, each built and manned by a different alien race. With its combination of arcade-style dogfighting and intergalactic strategy, *Star Control* lives up to its space-opera proportions. Ballistic (Accolade), for Genesis, PC, Amiga.

StarTropics combines action with fantasy role-playing on a chain of tropical islands in the Coral Sea. As a teenage adventurer, you embark on a dangerous search for your missing uncle, an archaeologist. Numerous enemies and hazards block your path, but you're armed with a lethal yo-yo, and you can find more powerful weapons and magic spells along the way. Lots of fun and lots of surprises. Nintendo, for NES.

Strider, adapted from an arcade game, is the story of a young warrior who is assigned the awesome task of thwarting an alien invasion of Earth. The Sega version of this game, at eight megabits, is the largest Genesis cartridge yet released. Lots of action and excellent graphics make it a winner. Sega, for Genesis; Capcom, for NES.

Super C is the sequel to *Contra*, one of the most popular Nintendo shooting games of all time. Once again, Sergeant Bill Ko and his comrade, Corporal Lance (alias Scorpion and Mad Dog) face a showdown with their old enemy, Red Falcon. Defeating him is easier if you tackle this one- or two-player game with a friend. The graphics and action are top-notch. Konami, for NES.

Super Mario Bros. 3 is the latest and most eagerly awaited chapter in the adventures of Mario and Luigi. Once again you must rescue Princess Toadstool from the clutches of the evil Bowser and free the Mushroom Kingdom from domination. Elaborate worlds, pipes, warp zones, and power-ups justify the unprecedented popularity of this massive game among Nintendo fans. Nintendo, for NES.

The Sword of Hope is the largest and most complex role-playing game available for the Game Boy. As Prince Theo of Riccar, you must find the fabled Sword of Hope to free the kingdom from an evil dragon. This game delivers a role-playing experience as satisfying and expansive as most role-players for the NES, and is certain to broaden the Game Boy's horizons. Kemco-Seika, for Game Boy.

Sword of Vermilion is a fantasy role-playing game in the tradition of *Phantasy Star* and *Phantasy Star II*. When the evil Tsarkon invaded peaceful Excalabria, the king entrusted his infant son to a servant and sent them away. You play a young man who has no idea of his true identity, but your life is about to change. This adventure has the colorful graphics and involved storyline we've come to expect from Sega's RPGs. Sega, for Genesis.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Fall of the Foot Clan brings the famous foursome of Leonardo, Donatello, Michelangelo, and Raphael to the Game Boy. Once again, the nefarious Shredder has kidnapped the beautiful April O'Neill, and the Turtles are rushing to her rescue. Incredibly, the graphics are even better than in the original NES version, and the stereo soundtrack is superb. Ultra, for Game Boy.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles — The Arcade Game is a bodacious sequel that's patterned after the arcade version rather than the original Nintendo version. All your favorite characters are here: the four Turtles, April, Splinter, and Shredder. This time the Turtles must rescue April and Splinter from the grip of brainwashed ninjas working for Shredder and a new villain, Krang. As action-packed and as much fun as ever. Ultra, for NES.

Test Drive III: The Passion puts you behind the wheels of three supercars — the Lamborghini Diablo, the Pininfarina Mythos, and the Chevrolet CERV III. Sit back and enjoy the northern California scenery as you compete in a road rally. New features include inclement weather, working wipers and headlights, and even off-road driving. But watch out for the cops! A must for auto nuts. Accolade, for PC.

Totally Rad is an action-adventure that stars Jake, a teenage skateboarder on a rescue mission. Jake's girlfriend and his girlfriend's father have been kidnapped by an evil wizard who's planning to invade California. Luckily, a good wizard teaches Jake some magic, including how to transform himself into a lion, eagle, or fish. Superb graphics and playability, and the magic adds a bit of strategy. Jaleco, for NES.

Ultimate Basketball is the first NES basketball game to put a full ten players on the court. All ten have their own statistics, and you have to keep them in mind when selecting plays. Although it's not really the *ultimate* basketball videogame, it is a very realistic one. American Sammy, for NES.

Unreal is the latest challenger for the title of top action game for the Amiga. In terms of graphics, sound, and difficulty, it's certainly an impressive contender. The 2-D side-scrolling scenes are incredibly detailed and beautiful. The 3-D first-person scenes — in which you fly on the back of a dragon — are somewhat less detailed, but amazingly fast. Overall, a striking display of 16-bit power. Ubi Soft, for Amiga.

WarBirds is a breakthrough — the first true flight simulator for a home videogame system. This World War I combat game lets you perform almost any maneuver that a real pilot can, including climbs, dives, turns, loops, and rolls. Your plane has real instruments, and you can look in any direction. You can duel the computer or hook as many as four systems together for wild multi-player dogfights. *WarBirds* blows everything else out of the sky. Atari, for Lynx.

☆ **Warlords** is a strategic war game set on the mythical world of Illuria. Eight nations are vying for supremacy, and they go to war with such fantastic forces as wolf-riding cavalry and flying dragons. Economic factors and terrain features play a major role, and there are also supernatural weapons to be found. You can play against the computer or as many as seven people. Action-packed and high-spirited. SSG, for PC.

Wing Commander lets you pilot four different types of spacecraft and pits you against the might of the Kilrathi empire. The course of the entire war rests with you. Simply the best space-combat simulation ever made for PCs, *Wing Commander* combines the tense excitement of an arcade shooter with a role-playing story of surprising depth and swash-buckling melodrama. Origin, for PC.

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AND PREVIEWS

TECMO BOWL SEQUEL COMING TO NINTENDO

Tecmo Super Bowl is the NES sequel to Tecmo's popular *Tecmo Bowl* football game. This time, you have even more playing options and game controls as you compete to win the National Football League's world championship.

In *Tecmo Super Bowl*, all 28 NFL teams play a regulation 16-week, 224-game season. And just as in the NFL, the teams which make it to the Super Bowl are determined by wild card and division winners going head-to-head in the playoffs.

Compete against the best players in the NFL with *Tecmo Super Bowl*.

You can compete against either another human player or a computer opponent, choosing from eight offensive plays and three defensive options. You can kick field goals, call time outs, and control the length of the game. Each team has its own style, and the ballplayers tire as the game progresses. Penalties and injuries can cost you valuable yardage and men.

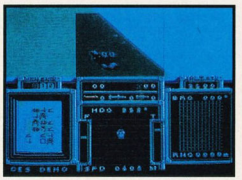
On offense, *Tecmo Super Bowl* lets you toss pitch-outs, hand off the ball, and fake handoffs — all with realistic fumble percentages. Defensive strategies include blocking passes and kicks, sacking the quarterback, and booting onside kicks.

Tecmo is also translating the original *Tecmo Bowl* for the Game Boy. That game should be available by this fall.

JET FIGHTER SIMULATION FOR NINTENDO

MicroProse, a leading computer game company, is taking to the skies of Nintendo with *F-15 Strike Eagle* for the NES. Adapted from a popular computer flight simulator, *F-15 Strike Eagle* lets you pilot a U.S. Air Force fighter jet through a realistic flying environment. Unlike other flight games for the NES, *F-15 Strike Eagle* allows *you* to decide where to fly and what to attack — the game doesn't force you to follow a preset path.

Your simulated fighter has the flying characteristics of a real F-15, complete with the ability to fly loops and full rolls. You can hone your skills by flying training sorties, then tackle seven combat missions. If you're good enough, the air force will award you its highest honors.



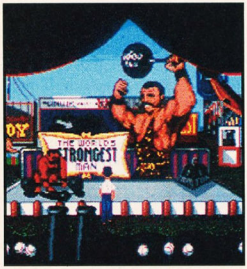
You can attack enemy bases and win air superiority in *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

STAR WARS FOR GAME BOY

Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Han Solo, Darth Vader, R2D2, and C3PO are coming to the Game Boy in a new title based on the hit *Star Wars* movie. But unlike the NES version, which is a collaboration between Lucasfilm and JVC, the Game Boy version will be designed by Ubi Soft, a French software company that specializes in computer games. *Star Wars* will be Ubi Soft's first title for the Game Boy. Ubi Soft says the game is scheduled for release sometime in 1992.

AND PREVIEWS

LES MANLEY COMES TO AMIGA



As Les Manley, you can pick up important clues in the most unlikely places.

Les Manley, the nerdish videotape rewinder at WILL-TV, sees a way to enhance his status, his bank account, and his love life. WILL-TV is offering $1 million to whoever finds the world's most elusive rock star — "The King." Following clues across the country, Les must solve puzzles to find The King, grab the million bucks, and win the affection of WILL-TV's lovely secretary, Stella Hart.

Accolade's *Les Manley: Search for The King*, originally a PC game, is now available for the Amiga. The sound, graphics, and game play have been redesigned to take advantage of the Amiga's special capabilities. The game also has more complex puzzles and a sentence parser that understands 1,500 words — even misspelled ones.

SMASH TV FOR NES

Vanna White and "Wheel of Fortune" are old hat in the future. Instead, the highest-rated TV game show is something a bit more thrilling — *Smash TV*. Acclaim's newest NES title is a translation of the popular arcade game.

As a contestant on *Smash TV*, you compete for large amounts of cash and the grand prize — your life. Acclaim says *Smash TV* will offer two unique features: more on-screen enemies than any other Nintendo game, and the ability to use both controllers at once. One controller lets you move your contestant, and the other lets you direct your firepower. By using the NES Satellite, two people can play.

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Triumph, Hudson Soft's first Game Boy title, is a strategy game set in a joke-filled medieval world. As the king of Joker Land, you alone can save your kingdom from its desolate fate. You must travel to 25 different castles, battling the Orc King and the army of each fortress. Only then can you face the Arch Orc himself.

You don't fight with swords, shields, and maces in *Triumph*. Instead, you move characters on a game board, challenging your opponents with playing cards. Although skeletons, spiders, orcmen, demons, and the cyclops do their best to cut your deck, the player with the high card wins. Finding magic spells can help even your odds against the orcmen.

NEW INDY JONES ADVENTURE

What do bullwhips, cryptic puzzles, and ancient civilizations usually mean to computer gamers? That's right: Lucasfilm Games plans to release a new Indiana Jones graphics adventure late this summer. Rather than being based on one of the three movies, however, it's an original Indy story. *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* sends you around the world with the daring archaeologist, searching for clues to unlock the mysteries of the lost continent, Atlantis.

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AND PREVIEWS

NEW NES ADVENTURE FROM LUCASFILM AND JVC

Defenders of Dynatron City, a futuristic action-adventure, is the second NES release from the partnership between Lucasfilm Games and JVC Musical Industries. Dynatron City is the site of the world's first experimental atomic-powered sewage treatment plant. But trouble is brewing—the plant has spawned renegade criminals and mutant villains.

Luckily, a group of superheroes also emerges from the city's radioactive slime. Jet Headstrong, Toolbox, Buzzsaw Girl, and the rest of the superheroes are determined to stop Dr. Mayhem and his slimy gang of criminals.

In *Defenders of Dynatron City*, superheroes who are born in radioactive slime are the atomic age's answer to the League of Justice.

DOWN-UNDER ADVENTURE FOR NES

The kiwi birds of New Zealand led a happy life full of singing and games—until they were captured by Wally Walrus. Tiki, the only kiwi who managed to escape, learned that his friends (including his feathered main squeeze, Phee-Phee) were sold to various New Zealand zoos. Armed with a bow and arrow, Tiki sets out on a journey to free his captive friends.

In Taito's *Kiwi Kraze* for Nintendo, you help Tiki travel by balloon to the zoos of Auckland, Rotorua, Waitomo Caves, Cook Strait, and Mount Cook in search of your feathered friends. Bombs, lasers, magical items, and friendly kiwis help you in your quest. But keep an eye out for Wally's evil henchmen — hermit crabs, Robo Kitty, Pricklys, Angle Bats, and Flying Spearmen. If you explore carefully, you'll also find secret bonus rooms and warps.

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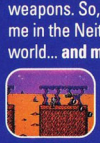

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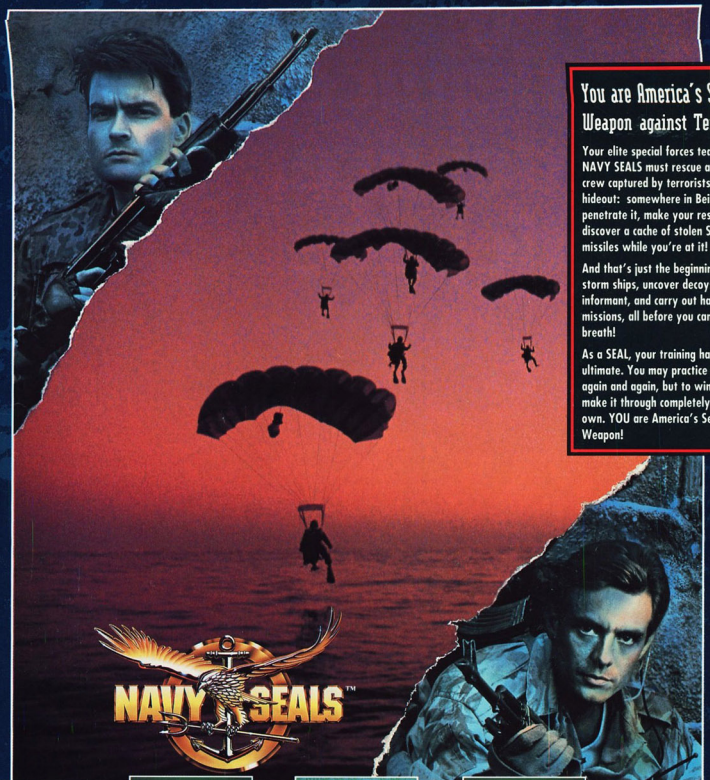

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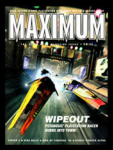

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